

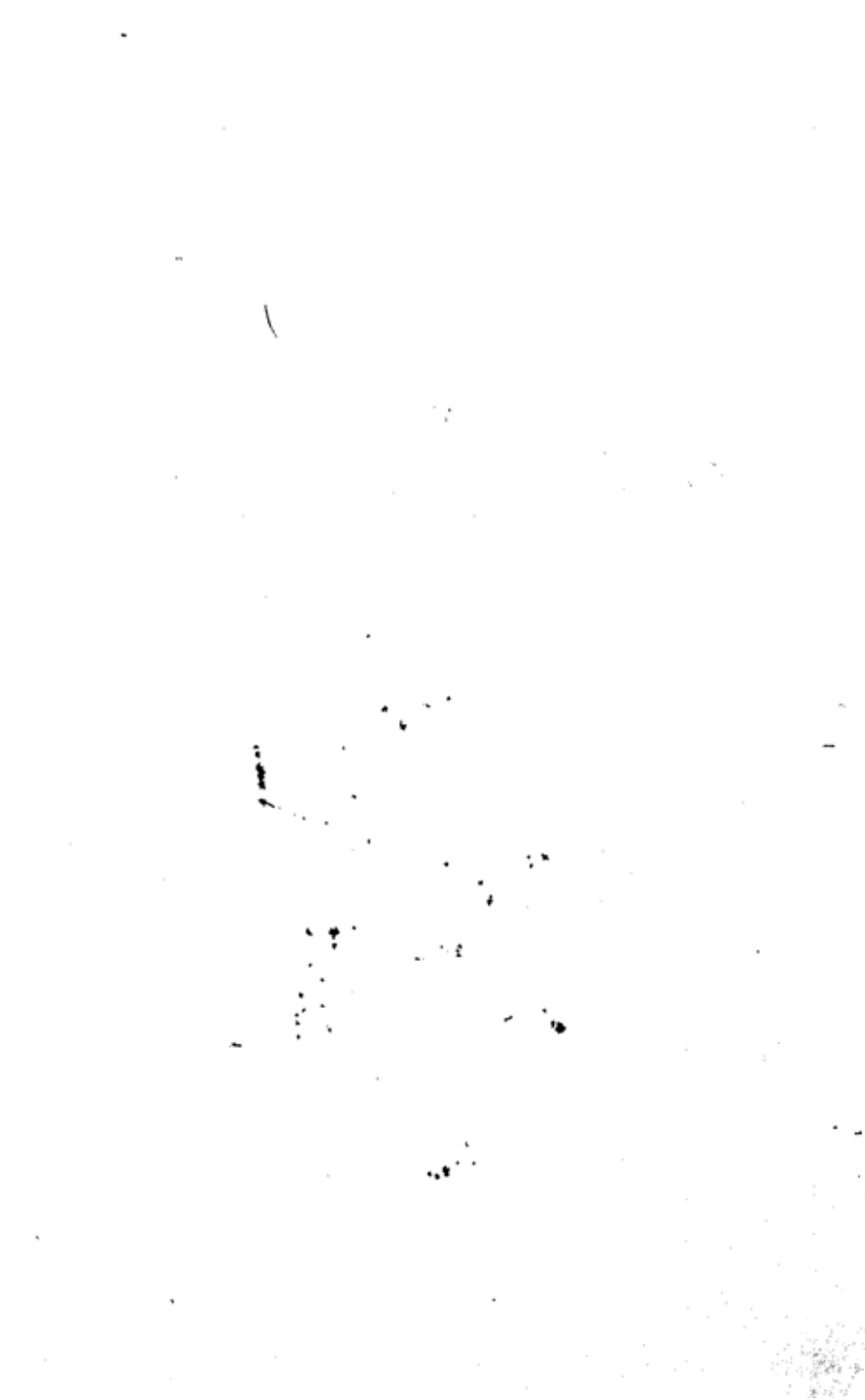
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

CENTRAL  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
LIBRARY

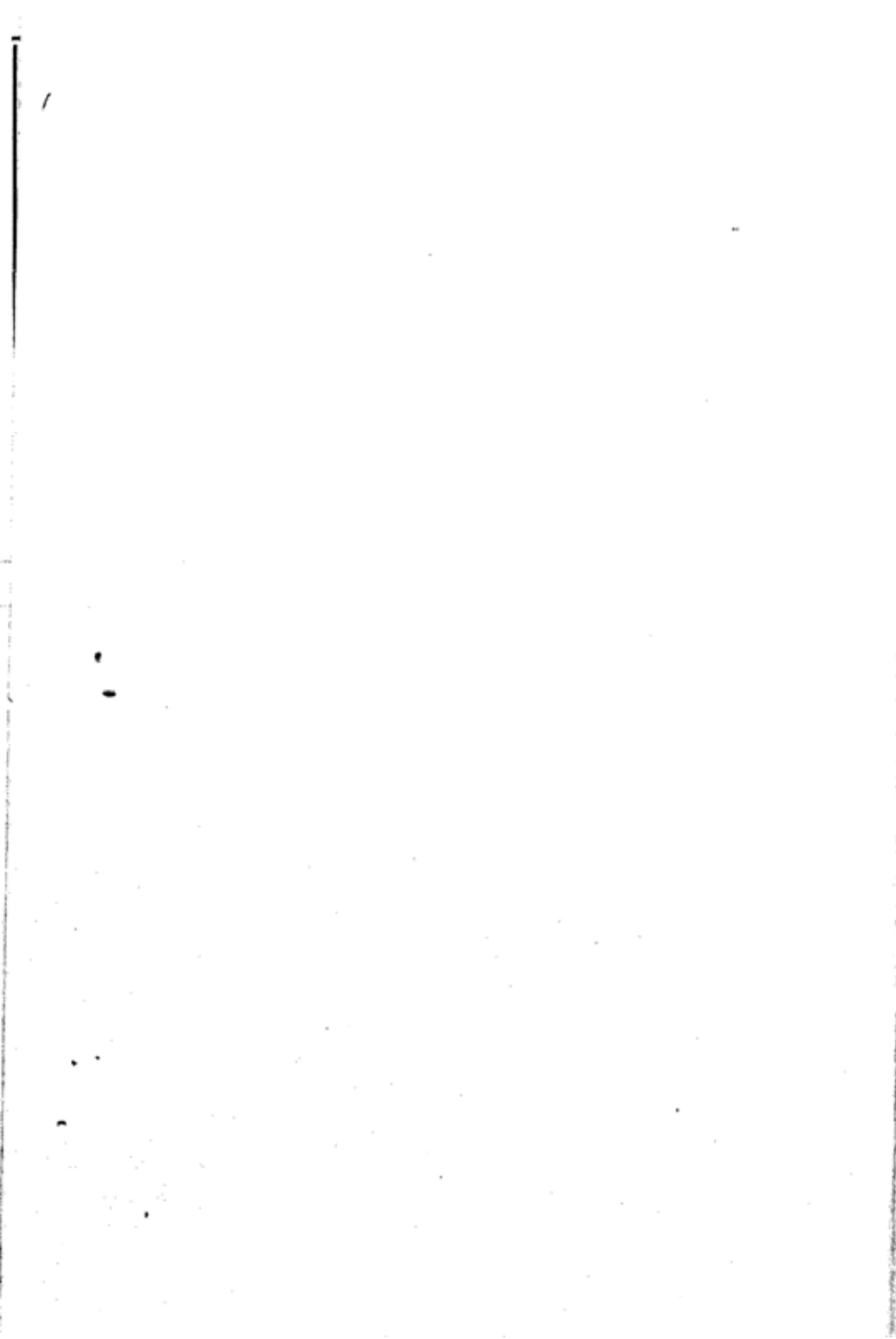
ACCESSION NO. 4666

CALL No. 370.4 Aza

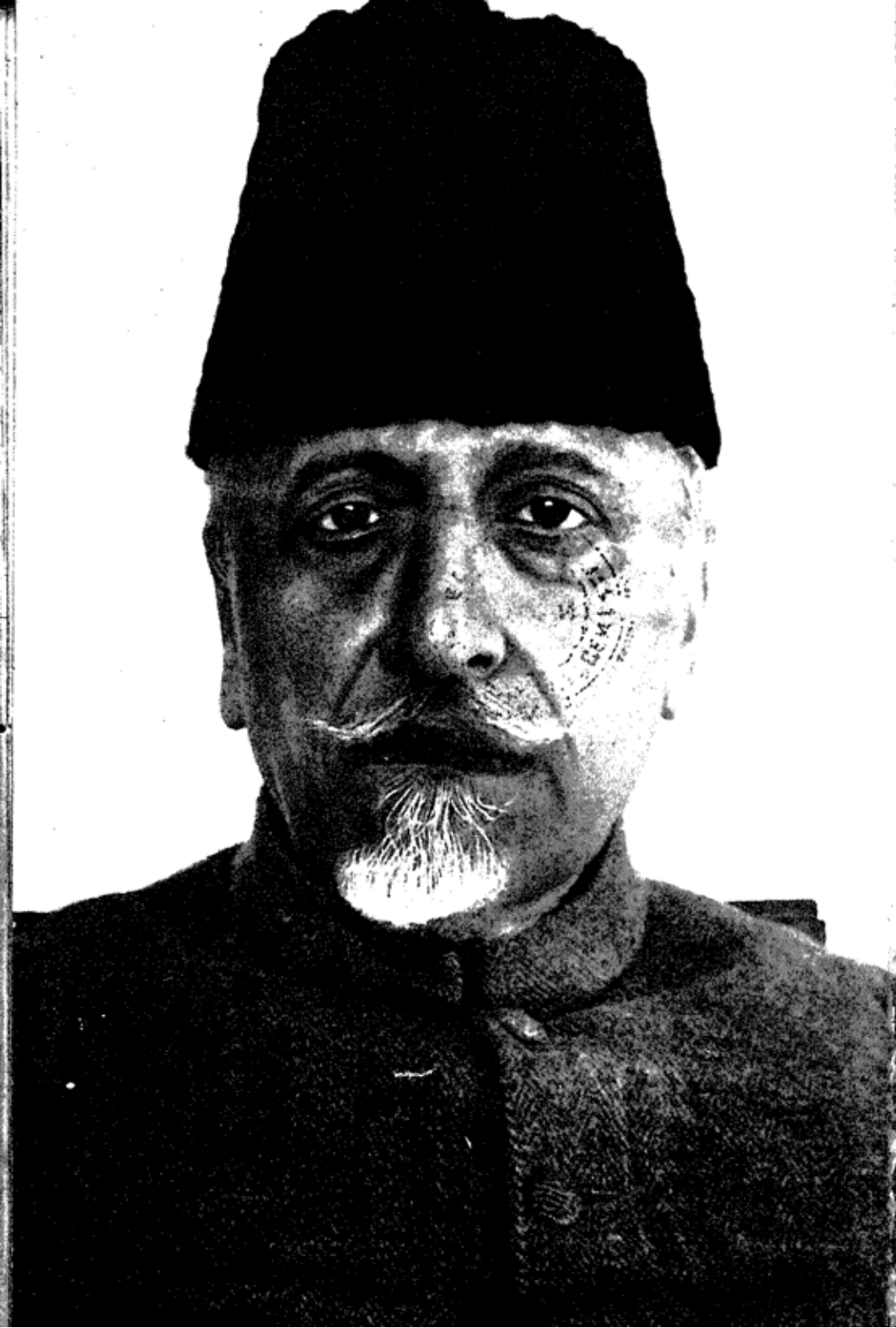
D.G.A. 79.







SPEECHES OF MAULANA AZAD  
1947—1955



SPEECHES OF  
MAULANA AZAD  
1947—1955



370.4  
Aza

4666



PUBLICATIONS DIVISION  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

JANUARY 1956

CENTRAL ANNUAL  
LIBRARY

Acc. No. 4666. ....

Date 28.6.56. ....

Call No. 370.4. / ~~Math~~ Aza

Inland — Rs. 6/8/-

Foreign—13 s. 6d./\$ 2

PRINTED IN INDIA

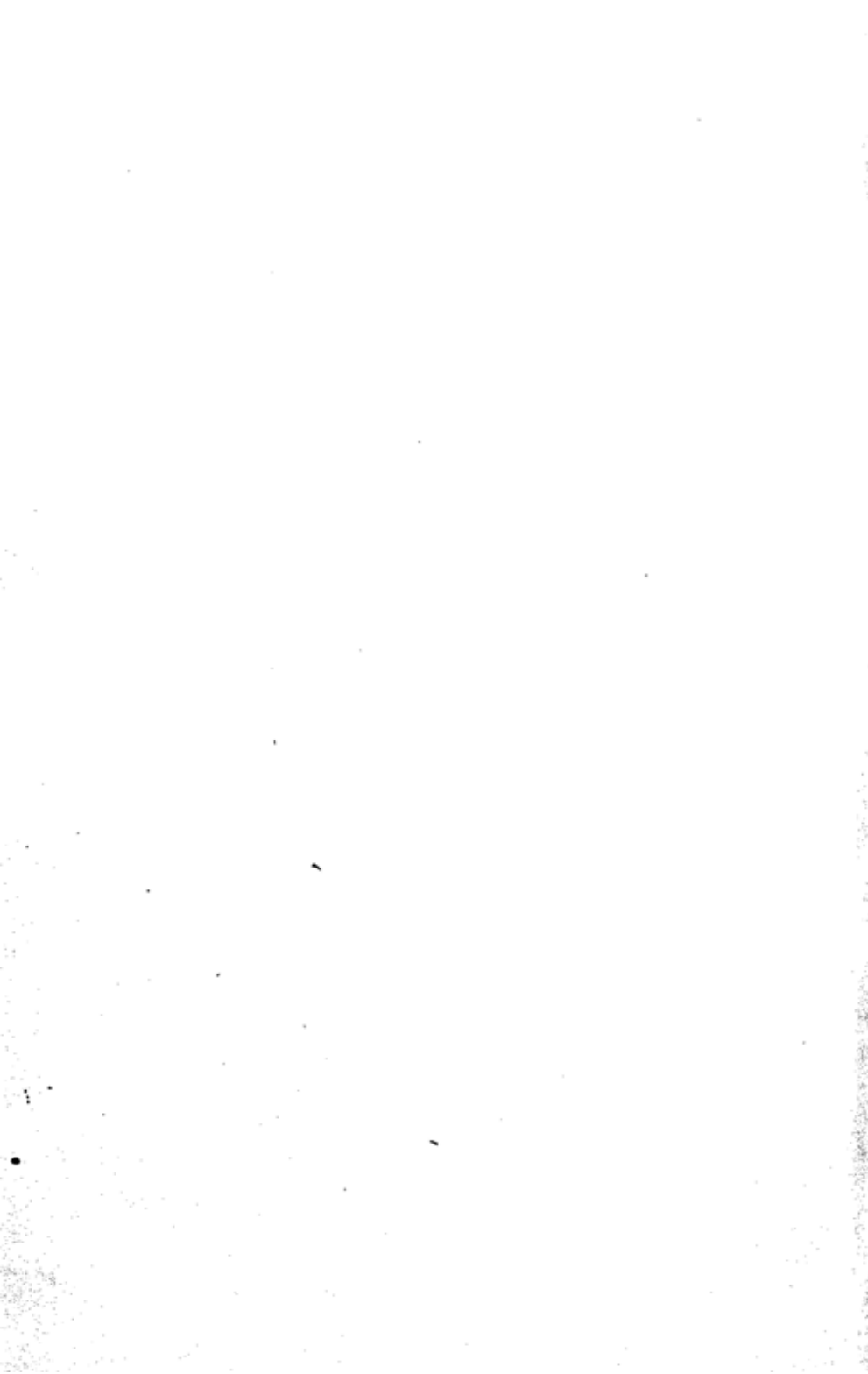
BY S. N. GUHA RAY AT SREE SARASWATY PRESS LTD., CALCUTTA-9 AND  
PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, DELHI-8

## PREFACE

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad became Minister for Education in the Government of India in January 1947. In May 1952, he also assumed charge of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Scientific Research. Many major decisions on problems of education and scientific research had to be taken during 1947-55. The present volume is a selection of speeches delivered by him on the various problems as they arose from time to time.

These speeches have been arranged chronologically with a view to giving the reader a historical perspective of the educational developments in India after independence.

free from Public Library, Durgam



# CONTENTS

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Education and National Reconstruction . . . . .    | 1    |
| Training of Teachers . . . . .                     | 9    |
| Education and Independence . . . . .               | 12   |
| Education and Religion . . . . .                   | 23   |
| A Plan for National Education . . . . .            | 28   |
| Social Education . . . . .                         | 38   |
| Indian Art through the Ages . . . . .              | 44   |
| Indian Art and Culture . . . . .                   | 49   |
| Study of Indian History . . . . .                  | 53   |
| National Education and Finance . . . . .           | 58   |
| Archaeology and History . . . . .                  | 69   |
| Aligarh and Indian Nationalism . . . . .           | 75   |
| Public Schools . . . . .                           | 84   |
| India and Unesco . . . . .                         | 88   |
| Research in Education . . . . .                    | 94   |
| Education of Youth . . . . .                       | 98   |
| India and Asia . . . . .                           | 104  |
| Art and Education . . . . .                        | 107  |
| Social Education in the Rural Areas . . . . .      | 115  |
| Programme for National Education . . . . .         | 126  |
| India and the World . . . . .                      | 132  |
| Place of Archives in History . . . . .             | 135  |
| Literature and Nationality . . . . .               | 141  |
| Unesco and International Understanding . . . . .   | 148  |
| The Role of Unesco . . . . .                       | 153  |
| Education and Technology . . . . .                 | 159  |
| Tagore and Indian Education . . . . .              | 163  |
| Public Libraries and Education . . . . .           | 167  |
| Agriculture and Education . . . . .                | 172  |
| Concept of Man in the East and the West . . . . .  | 178  |
| The Indian Historical Records Commission . . . . . | 188  |
| The National Art Treasures Fund . . . . .          | 194  |
| Art and the People . . . . .                       | 197  |
| Education Since Independence . . . . .             | 201  |
| Roads and Prosperity . . . . .                     | 210  |
| Tensions and Gandhian Outlook . . . . .            | 214  |



|   | Page |
|---|------|
| The Role of Dance, Drama and Music . . . . .  | 225  |
| A National Library for India . . . . .        | 231  |
| Progress of Technical Education . . . . .     | 235  |
| Housing and National Prosperity . . . . .     | 240  |
| Standards in University Education . . . . .   | 244  |
| Nature and Man . . . . .                      | 252  |
| Science and Prosperity . . . . .              | 256  |
| Future of Education in India . . . . .        | 259  |
| Education and Employment . . . . .            | 264  |
| University Grants Commission . . . . .        | 272  |
| Unesco and the East . . . . .                 | 276  |
| Reform in Education . . . . .                 | 285  |
| Literature and Life . . . . .                 | 291  |
| The Role of Visual Art . . . . .              | 297  |
| Sports . . . . .                              | 303  |
| Technical Education . . . . .                 | 307  |
| A Year of Progress . . . . .                  | 311  |
| 1857: The Need for a New Evaluation . . . . . | 322  |

## EDUCATION AND NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

It is universally recognised today that a system of national education is one of the fundamental tasks which faces any government. Not only is the existing condition of society determined by the quality of individuals composing it but its future as well. Nothing has a more important bearing on the quality of the individual than the type of education imparted. A truly liberal and humanitarian education may transform the outlook of the people and set it on the path of progress and prosperity, while an ill-conceived or unscientific system might destroy all the hopes which have been cherished by generations of pioneers in the cause of national freedom.

India is today on the threshold of freedom. It is therefore imperative that we survey the prevalent systems of education in order to find out how far they meet our national requirements. There can be no denying that the existing system of education was shaped by non-nationals in non-national interests. Macaulay is primarily responsible for our existing educational methods and ideals. He never concealed the fact that his chief aim was to create in India men who in training, outlook and loyalties would be devoted to the interests of Great Britain. Nevertheless, the great services which the existing system of education has rendered to the Indian people need not be denied. It opened to them a new world of science and modern technology. It inculcated a progressive spirit and brought Indian educational standards in line with the standards obtaining elsewhere. It has led to a re-awakening of the national spirit and a growth of modern and progressive outlook in all affairs of the world. There is equally no denying that this system has led to the creation of a small intelligentsia separated from the mass of the Indian people. It has also at times tended to divorce the educated class from the currents of India's traditional life. Dazzled by the achievements of the West, it has at times encouraged a tendency to disown or

look down upon our national heritage. It has also tended to encourage fissiparous tendencies. The greatest charge against the present system of education is that it has not led to the development of a national mind.

Macaulay's contempt for oriental studies is well known. History has not justified the sweeping condemnation which Macaulay extended to them. Nor can history justify the method which Macaulay adopted for the promulgation of learning in this land. Macaulay's contention that Sanskrit and Persian were unsuited to be the medium of instruction in India is no doubt correct, but English could serve the purpose no better. It is true that the different Indian Provincial languages were not at the time sufficiently developed to serve as the medium of instruction but there can be no doubt that a National Government would have taken these languages in hand and gradually developed them to serve the purpose. In any case, the Indian languages today have attained a development where they can serve as the medium of instruction up to the highest stage. The experiment of imparting instruction in the mother tongue up to the matriculation standard has already been tried with success and the time has come when the process must be extended further and all education in the land made accessible to the people in their own language.

All such development, however, presupposes a sound system of basic education. If the foundations have not been truly and firmly laid, no abiding superstructure can be built. The whole edifice of education and culture ultimately rests upon the teaching imparted in the early stages. In India this has been unfortunately neglected in a way which cannot be too strongly condemned. Education has often been left in the charge of persons who do not possess the minimum qualifications for it. Nor can they be blamed, for the profession of teaching has been debased against the best traditions of the land. In the past the status of the teacher in Indian society was an exalted one. He might not have been wealthy but his comparative poverty was compensated by the need of respect and prestige which the profession of teaching carried with it. Today unfortunately all this has changed, and the teacher, especially in primary stages, is considered as hardly better than an inferior servant. Any programme for reconstruction of education must therefore place in the forefront

the task of improving the status and condition of teachers, and I am confident that the new National Government of India will recognise this as one of its first and foremost tasks.

It is not necessary to go into the details of the scheme for reorganisation of basic education as that has already been sufficiently discussed in the press and on the platform. It will suffice to say that the basic scheme of education will go a long way towards meeting some of the points indicated above. This report popularly known as the Sargent Report not only ensures an improvement in the status of teachers in all stages but also lays down the criteria along which education for citizenship should proceed. The emphasis on the development of education through the mother tongue has also been sufficiently recognised in that scheme. It is a matter for pleasure that the Provinces are making arrangements for giving immediate effect to the scheme and have requested co-operation from the Centre. The Educational Adviser has received invitations from most of the Provinces and is shortly going out on tour. I propose to call a conference of Provincial Ministers and representatives of universities in order to plan out a comprehensive programme of work.

One question on which the report has not come to any definite conclusion is that of religious instruction in schools. I know that there is a sharp difference of opinion among experts on this question. Two committees appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Education have submitted contrary reports. In the past a majority of educationists placed the emphasis on purely secular education. This was true of Great Britain and in Russia, after the Soviet Revolution, there was a positive anti-religious temper in educational policy. Those who hold a different view emphasise that experience tends to prove the futility of education from which religion has been divorced. Today in Great Britain a system of education has been evolved under the supervision of the State. It is reported that Russia also has in the recent past recognised the value of religious instruction and taken steps to that effect.

The Government will have to give proper weight to both these points of view and come to a decision on the question. One thing, which, however, has to be remembered, is that in India the emphasis on religion has been and is greater than in other countries. Not only the past traditions of India but also the

present temper of the people tend to emphasise the importance of religious instruction. If the Government decide that religious instruction should be included in education, it seems imperative that the religious instruction offered should be of the best type. The religious instruction often imparted in India in private institutions is of a kind which instead of broadening the outlook and inculcating a spirit of toleration and goodwill to all men produces exactly the opposite results. It is likely that under State supervision even denominational teaching can be imparted in a more liberal spirit than under private control. The aim of all religious teaching should be to make men more tolerant and broadminded and it is my opinion that this can be more effectively done if the State takes charge of the question than if it is left to private initiative. I will indicate the decision of the Government on this question at an early date.

Another point on which I want to express my opinion is in respect of the educational activities of missionary societies. Friends from England have sent me cuttings from papers in which this question has been raised. There is no doubt that missionary societies have played a very important part in the dissemination of modern education and the development of the modern outlook. This is true not only of India but of other countries of the East as well. I can speak with personal knowledge of the Middle East countries. Before 1907 the only institution imparting modern higher education in Turkey was Robert College run by the American Mission and its contribution to the awakening of Turkey can never be forgotten. Modern education in Syria was largely the work of missionaries who founded three colleges in Beirut of which the most famous was the American Missionary College (Al Kulliyat-us-Suria). Higher education in Iraq is similarly indebted to 'Kulliya Qudais Yusuf', i.e., St. Joseph's College. The same story is repeated in Egypt. It is true that Mohammad Ali the Great founded in the first quarter of the 19th century overseas scholarships for Europe under the name of 'Irsaliat' but most of the important personalities in Egyptian renaissance are products of the Missionary College of Beirut. The well-known modern Arabic author, George Zaidan, whose *History of Islamic Civilisation* has been translated into English by Nicholson, was a student of the Missionary College of Beirut. The Sarroof Brothers, well-known editors of 'Al Muqattam' and

'Al Moqtataf' also received their education and their inspiration of service from the same missionary college.

These missionary societies helped not only in the spread of modern education but, what is more, contributed greatly to the development of indigenous languages. They were also in many cases the pioneers in oriental research and scholarship. Vondyke came as an American missionary to Beirut when he was only 18 and devoted himself to the development of modern education in Syria. The Scientific series which he published under the name of 'An Naqsh Fil Hajar' is one of the best scientific works in Arabic of the 20th century. Perhaps the best modern book on Astronomy in Arabic is his work entitled 'Al Hai-at.' I do not want to dilate here on the services they have rendered in China, Japan and other South-East Asian countries.

New education in India also began with the work of the missionary societies. The East India Company had at first been in favour of oriental education and it was through the efforts of the Serampore Mission that the foundations of European Education in India were laid. Since that time missionary societies have kept up their educational work and brought learning to millions who, but for their help, would have remained immersed in illiteracy and ignorance.

Their work in the development of Indian languages has also been of the greatest value. One of the first standard works in Urdu prose is a translation of the Bible that they completed in the beginning of the 19th century. Urdu has made tremendous strides in the last 150 years and yet this early translation of the Bible remains a standard of Urdu prose.

With such valuable examples of the work done by the missionaries in the past, there is no reason why their work on the same humanitarian lines should not receive equal appreciation in the future. It is only in respect of one problem that difficulties arise at times. This is on the vexed question of conversions and especially conversions *en masse*. World opinion has undergone great changes on the question and responsible missionaries have themselves come to recognise that mass conversions are in reality no conversion at all. Christ himself emphasised the baptism of the spirit rather than formal baptism by water, and missionaries would be true to the spirit of Christ if they preached His message of humanity instead of attempting to convert people to the dogma

of a Church. If all missionary societies adopt this enlightened outlook, there is no reason why independent India should in any way hesitate to accept the services which it is theirs to offer.

I would like to say a few words about another problem. The Deputy Educational Adviser (Resettlement) informs me that during the war two million soldiers were made literate by the Army through the use of the Roman script. Experience showed that they could acquire a working knowledge of Hindustani in three to six months' time. I am told that this would have been impossible to achieve if the Devanagri or the Urdu script had been used. Roman has thus solved the problem of finding alternative scripts for men of different provinces. If these men who have been made literate during their service in the Army are not to lapse into illiteracy, we must provide them with suitable literature in Roman Hindustani. There is a great demand for such literature and the Department is considering how to meet this demand.

It is desirable that every Indian should learn both Devanagri and Urdu scripts. This will, however, take time and till this is achieved, it would be worth considering whether the use of Roman as a supplementary script, in addition to Devanagri and Urdu, in central educational publications may not be a temporary expedient. There are millions of Bengalees, Madrasis, Oriyas, Assamese and men speaking other languages who can understand Hindustani and pick it up quickly but find an impediment in their progress because of the script. This, however, is a question which ought to be considered by educationists all over the land.

I will now indicate some of the main items which may be taken up in the near future :

1. The time has come for setting up a National Museum where the finest representations of Indian philosophy, literature and art may be preserved. The first step in this direction will be the setting up of a National Cultural Trust as proposed recently by the Central Advisory Board of Education.

2. There should be provision for fundamental research work, and for this, definite sums should be allocated every year. It is obvious that there can be no advance in either industry or technology without fundamental research work. The scope of such research should, however, be extended and cover not only the

scientific subjects but also the humanities including philosophy, the social sciences, anthropology, etc. The Co-ordination Committee of the Cabinet has approved, in principle, of a grant of Rs. 75,00,000 for fundamental research work in the next five years.

3. (a) There is also a proposal for the appointment of a committee to prepare a Guide for Teachers for the new scheme of education. While the Central Government do not wish to impose uniformity but to leave the greatest possible margin of freedom to the Provinces, there should be some indication of the general lines on which this education is to be imparted.

(b) The question of preparing some kind of a generalised curriculum may also be considered. Any fixed curriculum has the tendency of imposing rigid uniformity and therefore the preparation of this curriculum should be undertaken with the greatest possible care.

4. The Government of India are considering the question of making grants to educational experimental institutions without waiting to verify the results of such experiments. There are not many institutions of this kind and most of them have been unable to give their best as financial difficulties have hampered them from the very outset. It is not suggested that the Government of India should be lavish or careless in making grants but wherever genuine efforts of this kind are in evidence, the Government should come to the help of the institution at the initial stages so that lack of funds may not hinder the institutions from carrying out their experiments. Two institutions of this type which have recently received Government help are the Jamia Milia University, Delhi, and Santiniketan in Bengal. It is, however, obviously impossible to mention all such institutions.

5. Another field which requires immediate attention is the development of archaeological studies in India. We have as yet no complete history of India and it will have to be reconstructed from the monuments and other archaeological remains which are scattered all over the land.

6. Disraeli very rightly recognised that a democracy has no future unless it educates its masses. In India, the problem arises with even greater intensity. The problem of mass education here is of vast proportions and will require time for its solution. It cannot, however, wait and modern science has placed in our



hands effective instruments in the form of broadcasting and the film. I am considering schemes by which they may be utilised to the fullest extent for broadening the mind of the masses and opening up a new world of knowledge to them.

I will conclude by stressing once again the imperative necessity of reforming and expanding our system of education. Education should have the highest priority in our national budget and should take its place immediately after food and clothing. In fact, a proper system of education is necessary in order to tackle satisfactorily even these problems. I have every hope that we shall be able to make up our leeway by a determined and concerted effort and place education in India on a par with education in other civilised countries of the world.

## TRAINING OF TEACHERS

India which has taken its place in the comity of free nations of the world has to march forward in every field of her national life with alacrity, but you will agree that none of these fields is as important as the educational field. At present, the percentage of literacy in India is only 14·7, that is, out of every hundred nearly 85 persons are totally illiterate. Not counting the population of the provinces which have ceded from the Indian Union, the remaining population, according to the last census, is in the neighbourhood of 24,02,54,500. Of these, 2,93,72,000 are school-going children—between the ages of six and eleven. These statistics show that even if we ignore persons above the age of eleven we have still to make immediate arrangements for the education of about 3 crores of school-going children between the ages of six and eleven.

I am sure you will agree with me that this state of affairs is most deplorable and no civilised Government can tolerate it. If we are unable to make arrangements for the primary education of about 30 millions of our children, all our nation building schemes will, *ipso facto*, become valueless. The only way out therefore is to try and lift millions of these children from the depths of neglect and ignorance immediately.

The question is how best to solve this problem. The greatest hurdle facing us is the lack of trained teachers. Suppose, we take three teachers per 100 children, we will require a minimum of 9 lakhs of trained teachers for 30 million school-going children. If we want to break this vicious circle, we should not postpone our educational schemes simply because there are not sufficient trained teachers. Rather we should mobilise as teachers all the educated persons available, and at the same time carry on the training of teachers with the greatest possible speed, so that trained teachers can be made available in sufficient numbers in the shortest possible time.

The former Government of India had set up a Central Advisory

Board of Education which the present Government has continued. This Board had in the year 1944 submitted a detailed report on the post-war educational development. One of the basic recommendations in this Report was the establishment of new training institutions for teachers both by the Central and the Provincial Governments. Accordingly, all the Provincial Governments as well as the Central Government while formulating their five-year post-war programme had this recommendation in view. A number of such training institutions have already been opened and are still being opened in the various parts of the country.

The educational plan of the Central Government included a proposal to establish a Central Institute of Education located at Delhi. In 1945, the details of this scheme were finalised and Rs. 18,00,000 for its buildings and Rs. 2,45,000 for equipment, etc., were set aside. It was proposed that the building of the Institute should provide class-room accommodation for 300 students of both sexes and hostel accommodation for 150 students. It was also decided to have the Institute within the University grounds and regard it as a Faculty of Education of the Delhi University. It is estimated that when the scheme is in full operation, its annual recurring expenditure will be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 2 lakh. This sum has been sanctioned by the Government.

It was decided in 1945 that this scheme should start from 1946-47, but it could not be taken in hand and a full year was thus wasted. The building programme was held up owing to the non-availability of building materials. This year, however, it was decided to start the institution in a rented building. Accordingly, the house in which we are at present assembled, was acquired in July last; but we could not proceed with this work earlier owing to the recent unfortunate disturbances in Delhi. However, I am now happy that we have surmounted all our difficulties and that today this Institute is being opened by Your Excellency.

The teachers trained at this Institute will naturally be employed in the teaching institutions in the Centrally Administered Areas. But while gauging the real importance of the Institute, we should not give undue importance to this aspect of the Institute. The function of the Institute is something greater than

this. It will turn out teachers who will be 'model teachers' for provinces but over and above all this, this Institute will be a research centre for solving new educational problems of the country and will be a beacon light for the training institutions of the country. The problems facing the Institute will be : how to correlate the different systems of basic education; how to reform the present system of examinations; and how to mould the primary education of a child so that he is given full opportunity to develop his individuality and also to equip himself to keep abreast of world affairs. This and similar other problems will come before the Institute and it will have to find ways and means of solving them.

We have had to start this Institute in a building which is hardly suitable for it but there was no alternative owing to the acute shortage of suitable houses. This house, as Your Excellency can see for yourself, is not big enough for our requirements even with the two tents which we have had to pitch to supplement this accommodation. Because of this limited accommodation, our work and progress will necessarily be greatly hampered and restricted. We have every hope, however, that these difficulties will not hamper our progress for long and that soon this Institute will blossom forth and take its rightful place.

Your Excellency, we are fully aware of the keen interest which you have evinced in the social and educational activities of this country. We are deeply grateful to you for the zeal, the promptness and the personal interest which you have shown in dealing with the relief of the unfortunate and afflicted people from the Punjab. To show our appreciation it was only natural that I should have asked you to perform the opening ceremony of this Institute. I am thankful to you for your kindness in accepting my invitation. I will now request Your Excellency to perform the ceremony of opening the Central Institute of Education, Delhi. By pressing the electric button you will open the doors of the Institute. May the gates of darkness and ignorance which have prevented light from reaching the millions of my countrymen be thrown open very soon in the same manner.

## EDUCATION AND INDEPENDENCE

Last year the Chancellor of your University invited me to come here and deliver the Convocation Address. Your able Vice-Chancellor too pressed me for it. I would have certainly agreed to your request but my ill health stood in my way and I had to beg leave to be excused. But this year again when I was approached I could not venture to offer an excuse. Now I am here, and thank you for the opportunity you have given me to place my views before you.

Perhaps this is the first time in the history of the Indian universities when English is being replaced by an Indian language for delivering a Convocation Address. I do not know what your reactions would be to my speaking in Hindustani. Do you think it is necessary for me to offer an apology for breaking with the past? No doubt it is a departure from the old established practice and whenever a tradition is given up it is customary to offer an excuse. But I do not think you require an explanation from me. Whatever I am doing is no doubt an innovation, but I may be permitted to say that it is neither improper nor inopportune. Therefore, there is no need for an apology. Standing as I do before an audience entirely composed of Indians and within the precincts of an Indian university what could be more natural for me than to speak in an Indian language? Indeed, if an apology was needed, it was only for the adoption of a language forced upon us by the course of historical events. Even in our own country we were made to give up our own languages and adopt the language of a foreign country. Today we find ourselves in the unenviable predicament of offering explanations. The rest of the world naturally wants to know why we are without a national language in spite of our independence. How is it that this unnatural state of affairs has come to exist that we have no Indian language for running our government and our education?

Now the question arises how this unnatural state of affairs came to pass. There can be only one answer to this question. Our

educational system was not introduced by us. It was founded and controlled by foreigners. Whatever they decided to teach us was right, but their method of imparting education was wrong.

It is already known to you that during the regime of the East India Company when the question of introducing Western education in India first arose, the British officials were divided. One group was of the opinion that the old indigenous system of education should be encouraged while the second group was in favour of Western education. Ultimately, it so happened that the second group had its way. The famous Minute of Lord Macaulay bears upon this controversy. So far as this Minute deals with the introduction of Western learning, it was correct and we have nothing to say against it. But the method of teaching adopted by them was entirely unsuited to the life and needs of our countrymen. No Indian language but English which was foreign to us was made the medium of instruction. The result was that modern education in India began to be imparted in an un-Indian way. The Indians had to shape their minds in artificial and not in natural moulds. Not only they had to change their language but also their minds. Their whole approach to different branches of learning was through the medium of a foreign tongue. Now it became necessary for every Indian child to shape an artificial mind and to tackle every aspect of learning from an unnatural angle of vision. He could not enter the sacred precincts of learning with a natural mind.

His whole energy which should have been entirely devoted to learning is now divided, and he is forced to spend a great part of it in learning and mastering a foreign language.

Another great harm that accrued from it was that the development of our languages was impeded. If the Indian languages had been made the media of instruction a hundred and fifty years ago they would have come in line with the progressive languages of the world.

Supposing this educational revolution had been brought about by our own hands, we should have certainly done what other countries of Asia and the East did in the nineteenth century. Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Persia, China and Japan all felt the need of having western education. They established schools and colleges for modern learning, but none of them had the experience

of undergoing the artificiality of giving up their own language and receiving education through the medium of a foreign language.

It cannot be denied that the conditions prevailing in India were certainly different from those of other eastern countries and it was not easy to decide which language of the country should be the medium of instruction. At that time three classical languages, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit were taught in India. They were capable of becoming the media for western education but none of them could become the medium of instruction in India. Sanskrit was not a spoken language and its teaching was confined only to a few. Arabic too was in the same category so far as India was concerned. It was known only to a limited number of scholars. Persian, no doubt, was generally studied and was the official language of the country for about 600 years. But that too was not an Indian language. No Indian could speak Persian without learning it in the first instance. Evidently, only those languages could be adopted as the media of instruction which were spoken in the various parts of India. But all these languages had not fully developed, and they were not so refined or polished that they could serve the purpose of higher education. Under the circumstances they were brushed aside. Persian was disposed of simply by saying that it would not do for India. Thus ended the whole controversy.

But it may be remarked here that the difficulties which India had to face in the matter of language also presented themselves to some of the other Asian countries. Indeed, Egypt, China and Persia had their own classical languages. But Turkey and Japan were linguistically more or less in the same position as the Indian languages were in the nineteenth century. Their whole literary wealth was only poetical, but they had little prose literature. Still, unlike India they did not adopt a foreign language for purposes of education. They made their own languages the media of instruction and the result is before the world. Today in all the universities of Turkey and Japan education is imparted through the language of the country. There is no field in any branch of learning where their national languages are not advancing.

Had the educational policy of India been in the hands of Indians they would have adopted the same course as was done by Turkey and Japan. India today in that case would not have had

to face a situation when I have to think of making excuses for delivering an address in our own language.

But friends, there are always two sides to a picture in this pictorial world of ours. Whatever I have said up to now is one aspect of it. Justice demands that we should examine the other side of the medal as well.

Howsoever wrongly the English language made its way into our life, the fact remains that it has influenced our mental and educational outlook for the past one hundred and fifty years. This state of affairs though harmful in some ways has also benefited us in many ways. We have to acknowledge it without reservations. The greatest advantage that we gained from the adoption of English was that many of the obstacles were automatically removed from our newly born national life. It has led to the unification of the whole of the country. All the different parts of the country were brought together in spite of distances and different languages. In this respect it can be said that English has played the same part in cementing and uniting India as did Persian in Moghul times. Our country is a sub-continent and every part has its separate entity. But the English language has been responsible for creating a bond of mental fellowship among all educated Indians from Kashmir to Cape Comorin. It is a connecting link between all the Provincial Governments, universities, Legislative Assemblies, public platforms and national organisations. It was this state of affairs that led to the birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885 which created political awakening and gave a new national life to the country.

Then we have been benefited in another direction also. Through English India cultivated direct intellectual relationship with Europe and America. Her voice reached the outer world without any intermediary. I do not feel the slightest hesitation in saying that India's position and recognition in the international world are greatly due to our having recourse to the English language both written and spoken.

Anyway whatever opinion we may hold about English, we find it influencing all aspects of our national life. Now a basic problem confronts us. What is to be our attitude in future towards English? As the Ministry of Education in the Government of India has been entrusted to me, naturally you will want to know my views on education and language. I have given ample



expression to my ideas before but I will utilise this occasion and invite your attention to an important aspect of this question.

One thing is quite clear and definite, and I have no doubt that any Indian will disagree with me. The position that English occupies today in our educational and official life cannot be sustained in future. It is but essential that Indian languages should find their legitimate position. But we have to decide after mature deliberation how to bring about this change. Obviously there are two courses open to us. We may either take an immediate and sudden step or we may proceed gradually measuring our way and considering the pros and cons of our steps. I wish to make it quite plain to you that after having considered all the aspects of the question I have come to the conclusion that it is the second alternative alone that can suit us. If we are precipitous and take hasty steps without due consideration, we may endanger our national fabric.

Surely you cannot be unaware of the fact that no Indian would be more anxious than myself to see that Indian languages should replace English. You are also aware of the fact that I am not indebted to English college or school. As a student I was not even for a day in any college or school. I was brought up in a family where the old traditions of Indian learning and culture prevailed and there could not be the slightest trace of English education. Whatever education I received as a student was Arabic and Persian and was imparted in the old style. I came to learn English much later by self-study only. From this it will be clear to you that my educational connection with English is not of the same type as yours. You need not therefore suspect that I am in any way influenced in my opinion by my English education. I can make bold to say that my opinion is perfectly unbiased. I am not one of those who are the products of English type of universities. I am entirely disconnected with them and as such can take a detached point of view and understand your needs and requirements.

I find that from various parts of the country voices have been raised that we should at once banish English from our government offices. In some provinces decisions have been taken to the effect that from the New Year the Government Gazette will not be published in English. I have not the slightest doubt that this kind of precipitancy will retard the government machinery.

It is correct and essential to install provincial languages in place of English. But howsoever essential and desirable a thing may be, any hurried step, instead of helping us, may prove harmful. Even a good thing, if done in haste, may stand in our way.

Suppose you decide today in your province that after six months in all government offices English will be discarded. Just imagine what will come to pass in that case. Today English is serving the purpose of an inter-provincial language. The Central Government is being run with the help of English. What language is going to take the place of English? What will be the connecting link between Bengal and Madras? How will Assam and Bombay communicate with each other? How will the Central Government correspond with the provinces? You will naturally say we shall have a common language instead of English. But I put to you where is that language as yet? Will that language suddenly replace English? Ample time will be required for an Indian language to develop so as to become a vehicle of thought among all the peoples of India and serve as the official language of the country. If you suddenly displace a language which is holding its own for the past one hundred and fifty years and install in its place a language which needs some time to develop, you will not be able to solve the problem of language. On the other hand, you will create chaos and confusion in all your affairs.

We should remember that so long as the British were the rulers in India there was the danger that we might be swept away by all those influences which were the direct outcome of British rule. Now that we are a free nation, that danger is past. But then again there is the danger of going to the other extreme. We may become anti-everything that is English. I may warn you against this new danger. If you are not on your guard it may again thwart your national aspirations.

We have yet to evolve our national life. It can be perfected only when our languages come to occupy their natural position. We should first make a well thought out plan and proceed step by step.

After carefully considering all the implications of this question I have come to the conclusion that the problem of language has two aspects—one concerns government offices and the other education.

For government offices we should chalk out a programme on the following lines :

(1) The Central Government and the Provincial Governments should decide that in all government offices in future an Indian language will be used side by side with English. But in so far as English is the official language, the *status quo* will be preserved for five years.

(2) During these five years the Indian language will have to be so developed as to adapt itself to the official language. Its use may be encouraged gradually so that in the sixth year it may completely replace English.

In other words in the next five years there will be two official languages—one Indian language and the other English. In the sixth year only one language will be left. English will naturally lose its place except in some special departments.

So far as education is concerned, the following should be the programme :

(1) We should decide that the medium of instruction throughout will be the regional language.

(2) So far as elementary and secondary education is concerned there is no obstacle in our way. But we have to make provision for higher education. We have to make a start straightaway. Here, too, we shall have to fix a time-limit of five years. In this period we have to so advance that in the sixth year all branches of higher education should be handled through our own regional languages.

(3) By making the Indian languages the media of instruction it should not be understood that there will be no room left for English in our educational system. In order to keep ourselves in direct touch with the achievements of Europe and America a large section of our people will have to depend on English. English at present occupies an honoured place in the curricula of studies in Asia and the East. It is serving a useful purpose in creating contacts for us with foreign countries. We have connections with countries such as China, Japan, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, Persia, Turkey only through English. English is an international language today. It is in our interest that we should make the best use of our knowledge of English and continue its study in our educational institutions. But it goes without

saying that with the adoption of an Indian language it can be given the place of an important second language. English will be one of the special subjects for post-graduate studies.

As the problem of language and education is equally important for all the provinces, the best method for its consideration will be for the representatives of provinces to assemble together and deliberate on it. The Central Government will help them as much as it can. It was one of the objects for which an Educational Conference was to be called by the Government of India in July 1947 but it had to be postponed on account of the political conditions prevailing then. Now it has been decided to hold it in January 1948. It is hoped that we will fully consider this problem on that occasion.

In this connection there is another thing to which I shall invite your attention. Man is always inclined to go to extremes in realms of thought and action. It is very seldom that he steers a middle course, and it is where he stumbles. He is like the watch of which the regulator has gone wrong. It goes either too fast or too slow. It never keeps right time. It is not many years when our educated young men had lost themselves in imitating the English, in their language, dress, manners, etc. They were not mindful of their own heritage. Some of them felt ashamed to talk to their own countrymen in their language. They were ever ready to quote Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe and Wordsworth but they felt no love for Valmiki, Kalidasa, Khusro or Anis. Then there came a time when under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi the national movement took a new turn and the craze for imitating the British began to wane. But now I notice that a number of my countrymen are on the verge of making another mistake. Previously they were on one brink of the precipice and now they want to jump over to the other extreme. By Indian nationalism it is now meant that we should forget the English language and literature and that we should have nothing to do with Milton or Shakespeare. From certain quarters I hear that in order to be true nationalists we should have no tinge of modern civilisation in us. I believe there is nobody here who holds these views. But if there is any I must remind him that just as the previous position was wrong, this latter position will also be in the same category. In the ineffaceable words of the Buddha *via media* is the only tangible reality.

Just as it was not proper for you to lose yourself in the slavish love of western civilisation or literature to the extent that you might forget the grand and proud civilisation of your own country, similarly it would be wrong to put yourself in a cage so that no ray of the light of western learning and civilisation may enter it. Do not forget that you can seal all your worldly possessions within national and geographical limits but no seal can be put on learning and civilisation. They are outside the pale of boundaries, and seals are of no avail there. For them there are no territorial limits. They are above nationalities. They are free from the stains of race, colour or factions. They might have originated in any part of the world but they are now the common heritage of mankind and are the joint property of all countries and nations. No doubt Shakespeare was born in England but the immortal works of Shakespeare are for all countries. Even if England wants it she cannot keep Shakespeare to herself. Do you think that the dramas of Kalidas were also Indian nationals just as Kalidas was? Do you think no foreigner has a claim on them?

Friends, in the advancement of nations there is no greater hindrance than narrow-mindedness. It is our duty to keep ourselves free from this disease in this new era of independence which has just begun. There is no other disease so dangerous for the healthy growth of national life. It makes its appearance in every field of thought and action. Like an actor it masquerades in disguise. In the domain of religion it appears in the form of blind faith and wants to deceive us in the name of orthodoxy. In politics it wants to overpower us in the guise of nationalism. In learning and culture it makes an appeal to us in the name of our nation and country. It behoves us not to be taken in by these fictitious names. We must remember that the root cause of all this is nothing but narrow-mindedness.

We have to keep in mind that the nationalism propagated in the nineteenth century Europe is all shattered and the world is sick of the bounds of narrow nationalism. It is anxious to break those shackles. Instead of small cooped up nationalities the world wants to build supernationalism. Obviously there is no room for narrow-mindedness in this modern age. We shall find a secure place in the comity of nations only if we are international-minded and tolerant.

It is possible that other nations may have to learn new lessons

for broadening their outlook and for cultivating a spirit of tolerance. But so far as India is concerned we can say with pride and glory that it is the main trait of our ancient civilisation, and that we have been steeped in it for thousands of years. In other countries differences of thought and action led to mutual warfare and bloodshed but in India they were resolved in a spirit of compromise and toleration. Here every kind of faith, every kind of culture, every mode of living was allowed to flourish and find its own salvation.

From the dawn of history Indian mind has been comprehensive, and tolerant of every kind of thought. It admitted every kind of faith and accommodated all shades of opinion. It was ready to offer hospitality to every new-comer. New caravans of various peoples and cultures arrived here and found their resting places. Its orbit of social life was not shut on any creed or religion. The highest school of Vedantism flourished side by side with the agnosticism and atheism. Today the world is wonderstruck at the vast all-comprehensive nature of Indian philosophy. There is no school of philosophical thought which is not found here. What we actually do not find is the clash of opinions or the breaking of heads merely because of the differences of opinion. This is the one grand feature of ancient Indian culture which has been recognised by a great many thinkers of the modern world. They candidly avow that this is the great message of ancient Indian civilisation. The world has yet to learn it. In this connection I shall quote from Dr. Radhakrishnan, the famous Indian author, the well-chosen and balanced words which he has used in his valuable book entitled—*Indian Philosophy*:

“The explanation of the miscellaneous character of the Hindu religion, which embraces all the intermediate regions of thought and belief from the wandering fancies of savage superstitions to the highest insight of daring thought, is here. From the beginning the Aryan religion was expansive, self-developing and tolerant. It went on accommodating itself to the new forces it met with in its growth. In this can be discerned a refined sense of true humility and sympathetic understanding. The Indian refused to ignore the lower religions and fight them out of existence. He did not possess the pride of the fanatic that his was the one true religion. If

a god satisfies the human mind in its own way, it is a form of truth. None can lay hold upon the whole of truth. It can be won only by degrees, partially and provisionally.”\*

If liberality of thought and toleration are the most precious heritage of ancient Indian civilisation, shall we not prove worthy inheritors of this great heritage? Shall we let that kind of narrow-mindedness raise its ugly head which is in the air today? Today when all the advanced nations of the world are looking up to India for her ancient message of toleration and broad-mindedness, shall we, too, engrossing ourselves in sectionalism degrade ourselves to the extent that we may have to learn this lesson from others? Today India is free. There is no outside pressure to check her. She can have any kind of mental mould she pleases. Will it be exclusive, of which the world is sick today, or will it be all-inclusive which has been the characteristic of Indian culture throughout the ages? The eyes of the whole world are turned towards us. It is for us now either to disappoint or to carry a message of hope to the distressed world.

---

\**Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, 2nd edn., page 119

## EDUCATION AND RELIGION

On the occasion of this fourteenth session of the Central Advisory Board of Education I accord my sincere welcome to you. Historically speaking, it is the fourteenth session as thirteen have already been held. But to be more accurate, I think we should call it the Inaugural Session of the Board, since the first thirteen took place during British rule which on August 15, 1947, came to an end and with it a long chapter of Indian history. Today we are assembled in a new India which has yet to make its history.

I believe it will not be out of place to mention that the change in the political situation has greatly affected the temper and nature of the work which we have undertaken. The scales in which the educational problems were weighed by this Board until now have grown out of date. New scales with new weights will have to be substituted. The dimensions of the national problems of the day cannot now be judged by the measurements which have been employed so far. The new aspirations of the New India will require fresh outlook and new measures to tackle its problems.

With whatever depth of vision and sympathetic imagination the Board might have tackled the educational problems in the past, it could not escape the fact that there was no free National Government to support it. In spite of its desire to have the fullest scope it had to keep itself somewhat in restraint. Now things have changed. The nation, about the educational problems of which you are going to deliberate, has its own government at your entire disposal. The Government in its turn expects that you, too, offer your deliberations with the same tenacity of purpose and breadth of vision as are guiding the administration today.

But if we want to adopt new measures with fresh determination and redoubled efforts, it should not mean that we do not acknowledge the past services of the Board. Its lengthy reports covering thousands of pages are a record of the zeal and ability with which

---

*Presidential speech at the Fourteenth Session of the Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, January 13, 1948*



the task was handled in the past thirteen years and the present day educational activities of the country bear testimony to it. Probably the most valuable service rendered by the Board was the preparation of the scheme of Basic Education in 1944. It was the first occasion in the history of British India when the problem of elementary education was presented in its true aspect. A scheme was then initiated which contained the elements of broad outlook and bold action, the two things which were least expected in the then prevailing circumstances. The name of Sir John Sargent who was our Educational Adviser is intimately connected with the scheme because of the prominent part he took in framing it. I am glad that he will continue to remain in our country though at the moment he is away and unable to be present at this session.

Now we have to think how far this scheme can be adapted to suit the changed circumstances and how soon obstacles in our way can be removed. But I will not discuss this question at this time, as an educational conference which is to tackle such problems has been called to meet here as soon as this session is over. We shall have ample opportunity of taking up these questions there.

But there is a particular aspect of the question to which I shall invite your attention. In connection with the scheme of the Basic Education the question of religious instruction had cropped up at the time. Two committees of the Board pondered over it but they were unable to come to an agreed decision. I should like this question to be reconsidered in the light of the changed circumstances. For our country this question has a special importance.

It is already known to you that the nineteenth century liberal point of view concerning the imparting of religious education has already lost weight. Even after the World War I a new approach had begun to assert itself and the intellectual revolution brought about in the wake of the World War II has given it a decisive shape. At first it was considered that religions would stand in the way of the free intellectual development of a child but now it has been admitted that religious education cannot altogether be dispensed with. If national education was devoid of this element, there would be no appreciation of moral values or moulding of character on human lines. It must be known

to you that Russia had to give up its ideology during the last World War. The British Government in England had also to amend its educational system in 1944.]

So far as India is concerned, the problem presents itself in an entirely different shape. Europe and America felt the need of religious education as it was observed that without religious influences people became over-rationalistic. But in so far as they are working in Indian life we have to face the other side of the medal. We have no fear that people will become ultra-rationalists. On the contrary we are surrounded by over-religiosity. Our present difficulties, unlike those of Europe, are not creations of materialistic zealots but of religious fanatics. If we want to overcome them, the solution lies not in rejecting religious instruction in elementary stages but in imparting sound and healthy religious education under our direct supervision so that misguided credulism may not affect the children in their plastic stage.

It is obvious that millions of Indians are not prepared to see that their children are brought up in an irreligious atmosphere and, I am sure, you, too, will agree with them. What will be the consequence if the Government undertake to impart purely secular education? Naturally people will try to provide religious education to their children through private sources. How these private sources are working today or are likely to work in future is already known to you. I know something about it and can say that not only in villages but even in cities the imparting of religious education is entrusted to teachers who though literate are not educated. To them religion means nothing but bigotry. The method of education, too, is such in which there is no scope for broad and liberal outlook. It is quite plain, then, that the children will not be able to drive out the ideas infused into them, in their early stage, whatever modern education may be given to them at a later stage. If we want to safeguard the intellectual life of our country against this danger, it becomes all the more necessary for us not to leave the imparting of early religious education to private sources. We should rather take it under our direct care and supervision. No doubt, a foreign government had to keep itself away from religious education. But a National Government cannot divest itself of undertaking this responsibility. To mould the growing mind of the nation on the right lines is its

primary duty. In India, we cannot have an intellectual mould without religion.

But if religious instruction is to be a part of basic education, what will be its proportion ? How is it to be managed ? These are questions which are to be thoroughly considered. Indeed, there will be difficulties in the way. A solution will have to be found. But I need not go into details. If the main issue is settled, details can be tackled later on. In any case I request you to appoint a committee to go into the question *ab novo*. It may be authorised to send its recommendations directly to the Government.

There is another problem on which you have to take a final decision now. What is to be the medium of instruction in our educational institutions ? I am sure there are two things with which you will agree. First, that in future English cannot remain the medium of instruction. Secondly, whatever the change may be in this direction, it should not be sudden but gradual. In my opinion, so far as higher education is concerned, we should come to the decision that the *status quo* may be preserved for five years. But along with it a provision may be made by the universities for the coming change. I should like you to make your suggestions to the Government after due deliberation.

But in this connection a fundamental question arises with regard to Indian languages. How is the change to be brought about ? Is university education to be imparted through a common Indian language or the provinces may be given an opportunity to have their own regional languages for university teaching ? English was a foreign language. We were greatly handicapped by having it as our medium of instruction. But we were also greatly benefited in one way that all the educated people in the country thought and expressed themselves in the same language. It cemented the national unity. It was such a great boon to us that I should have advocated its retention as the medium of instruction, had it not been fundamentally wrong to impart education through a foreign language. But obviously I should desist from offering this advice. I put it to you, if only till recently a Madrasi or a Punjabi or a Bengalee felt no difficulty in receiving education through a foreign language, why he should be handicapped if he were to be educated through one of the Indian languages. If instead of English we adopt an Indian

language, we shall certainly be able to retain the same intellectual unity which was created for us by the English language. But if we fail to substitute an Indian language for English our intellectual unity will certainly be affected.

The alternative course before us is to have regional languages for university teaching and one common compulsory language for the Central Government and for inter-provincial communication. Anyhow it is but necessary that you should come to a final decision on this point after discussion and deliberation.

## A PLAN FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

6.5.58  
11.51 AM It is exactly a year ago that I assumed charge of this Ministry on January 15, 1947. It was then my intention to summon immediately an educational conference of representatives of Provincial Governments, the States and the universities in order to chalk out our future programme of action. In fact, dates had been announced for such a conference twice, but circumstances over which we had no control intervened on both occasions. I need not go into the reasons for these postponements as they are well known to you and will only say that I have spared no efforts to summon the conference as early as possible. In any case we have met today and I have every hope that the combined wisdom of all who are present today will enable us to formulate schemes that will meet adequately the educational requirements of this ancient land. I extend to you my cordial welcome and thank you all for your response to my invitation.

The agenda is already before you. You will find that it contains only the most pressing problems that confront us today. The first issue refers to the provision of basic education for every citizen of the State. It is accepted on all hands that without such education a modern democratic state cannot flourish or perform those functions which are expected of it. The scheme of Post-war Educational Development prepared by the Central Advisory Board of Education has been accepted by the Central and the Provincial Governments. Steps have already been taken to set on foot the programme of action according to a five-year plan, but I must point out that all these have been done according to old methods and on the old scales. After the attainment of our independence, we cannot, however, be content with programmes which were considered adequate for the old regime. Thus, no one will for a moment tolerate today that 40 years must elapse before the full scheme of basic education for all the inhabitants of this land can be implemented.] In fact, even half that period will

Opening Address at the All India Educational Conference, New Delhi, January 16, 1948

seem to many to savour of delay and procrastination. We must therefore devise measures by which the educational progress of this country can be so accelerated that we reach our objective within a much shorter time.

I know the many difficulties and obstacles which face us. I know that on account of the happenings in the recent past, the attention of the Government and the people has often been diverted from constructive work. After full consideration of all these factors, I would still assert that education cannot wait. Even if other nation building activities of the Government have to be slowed down or deferred on account of such difficulties, education, at any rate, must be pushed forward as rapidly as possible. We must not, for a moment, forget that it is the birthright of every individual to receive at least the basic education without which he cannot fully discharge his duties as a citizen.

In talking of basic education, we have to deal separately with the problem of providing education to school-going children and to adults. The population of India today, after partition, is roughly 24 crores, if we leave out of account the people of the States. The school population will therefore be about 2,93,72,000 if we consider the age-group of 6 to 11 years. If we calculate on the basis of even three teachers for every hundred pupils, this would require about nine lakhs of teachers for teaching about three crores of boys and girls. I will not raise here the question whether we should discourage single-teacher schools, though the best educational opinion favours at least two teachers for a school. In any case, the provision of nine lakhs of trained teachers immediately seems an altogether impossible task and nothing that the Government can do can remedy this defect overnight. In fact, this seems to be one of the main reasons why 40 years was regarded as the minimum period which must elapse before educational facilities can be provided for all citizens of the land.

We have, however, already seen that we cannot wait for such a long time and therefore my appeal will be to all educated men and women of this country to come forward to meet this deficiency. I would urge upon every educated man and woman to regard it as a sacred national service to come forward and serve as a teacher for at least two years. They should regard it as a sacrifice to the national cause and accept for their services

whatever allowance the State may afford. We may also consider some kind of conscription for the purpose. If every matriculate is required to put in one year's and every graduate two years' service in education before he or she obtains his or her certificate, we would get a large supply of teachers for our purpose. If two lakhs of educated men and women come forward every year, we can in five years have the minimum number of teachers necessary for fulfilling our plans. This will, however, be an emergency measure and cannot continue indefinitely. We must therefore devote these five years for the greatest possible expansion in the provision of facilities for training teachers, so that, by the end of that period, we may gradually replace volunteer teachers by teachers who have taken up teaching as their vocation.

Another great obstacle towards the immediate provision of educational facilities for all is the financial implication of constructing the necessary school houses and other buildings. This, however, need not and should not deter us. I would go so far as to say that we need not just now make any provision for building expenses at all. India is a country where for nine months in the year pupils can work in the open without any difficulty or injury to their health. In villages, if necessary, educational work can be carried on under the trees and even where structures have to be put up whether in town or village these can be built with bamboo and mud at a much lower cost than a pucca building would cost. In addition, we must never forget that in India there have already been voluntary contributions towards the establishments of schools and I have no doubt that if we can tap fully the resources of private munificence, the problem of meeting the cost of educational structure will at least be partially met.

Another chief obstacle to the immediate fulfilment of the Basic Education Plan is the problem of finance. For basic education alone we require at least nine lakhs of teachers. The Pay Commission recommended a scale of Rs. 30-50 for such teachers. I realise that this is hardly enough to attract the best type of candidates, but as I have stated earlier, my appeal is to educated men and women to regard this educational service for two years as a sacrifice in the cause of the nation. They must therefore agree to work on this meagre pay and look at it more in the nature of an allowance than wages for their labour. I have suggested that we should have at least two lakh volunteers every year which will

give four lakhs of such volunteers at a time from the second year of the enforcement of the scheme. Even on the basis of pay suggested in the Pay Commission's Report, this would mean a wages bill of Rs. 2 crore per month or Rs. 24 crore per year for the next five years. The amount actually spent on primary education by the Provinces and the Centre as shown in the budget for the year 1945-46 is as follows :

| Name of Province                    |    |    |    | Expenditure on primary education by various provinces during 1945-46 |
|-------------------------------------|----|----|----|--|
|                                     |    |    |    | Rs.  |
| ASSAM                               | .. | .. | .. | 21,66,186  |
| BIHAR                               | .. | .. | .. | 2,09,820   |
| BOMBAY                              | .. | .. | .. | 1,71,22,281  |
| C.P. & BERAR                        | .. | .. | .. | 23,60,391  |
| MADRAS                              | .. | .. | .. | 2,89,28,403  |
| ORISSA                              | .. | .. | .. | 16,77,017  |
| UNITED PROVINCES                    | .. | .. | .. | 57,52,008  |
| Total                               | .. | .. | .. | 5,82,16,106  |
| BENGAL (Undivided)                  | .. | .. | .. | 74,10,142  |
| PUNJAB (Undivided)                  | .. | .. | .. | 57,66,474  |
| Total                               | .. | .. | .. | 1,31,76,616  |
| Total of all Provinces              | .. | .. | .. | 7,13,92,722  |
| <i>Centrally Administered Areas</i> |    |    |    |  |
| AJMER-MERWARA                       | .. | .. | .. | 2,29,634   |
| CIVIL & MILITARY STATIONS           |    |    |    |  |
| BANGALORE                           | .. | .. | .. | 1,03,958   |
| COORG                               | .. | .. | .. | 47,430   |
| DELHI                               | .. | .. | .. | 2,72,564   |
| MINOR ADMINISTRATIONS               | .. | .. | .. | 1,49,960   |
| Total                               | .. | .. | .. | 8,03,546   |
| Grand Total                         | .. | .. | .. | 7,21,96,268  |

The above figures have been taken from the Provincial General Educational Table. Since then there have been considerable increases in the provision for Education in the Central and Provincial Budgets, but figures are not at present available for the years 1946-47 and 1947-48, except in the case of the Centre. In



the Centre, the Budget provides for a little over Rs. 11 lakh for 1947-48. We may, however, ignore these variations as well as the variation that has been caused by the partition of the Provinces of Bengal and the Punjab.

We would therefore have to find additional funds to the extent of about Rs. 16 crore for the next five years. In Bengal, an attempt has been made to find money for educational purposes by the imposition of an educational cess. It is for you to consider whether some such method may not be applied to other provinces in order to meet part of this gap. You have also to suggest what further steps the Central Government can take in addition to what it has already done.

✓ I now come to the problem of providing for the education of adults who are illiterate. Its importance need hardly be emphasised, especially to a body of educational experts like you. It is obvious that with the extension of democracy, the problem of adult education has become even more important than it was in the past. As you know, some work for adult education has been started in the provinces since 1938 but this was on a very small scale and must be increased and expedited manifold, if we are to obtain the desired result. Adult education has two aspects, *viz.*, (a) arrangements for making the adults literate, and (b) the provision of measures to enlarge their minds and enable them to take an intelligent interest in the affairs of the country.

I will take up the question of education in the second sense first, as obviously this is more important in the case of adults than mere provision of literacy. Such expansion of the mind of the adults can largely be effected today through the use of scientific methods and machinery which has made our task in this respect much lighter than it was before. There is experience of countries like 2. Russia and the U.S.A. where open-air drama, the film and the radio have been used to very great effect. Russia has, in fact, succeeded in carrying out her successive five-year plans largely through the use of such scientific methods and machinery. We should benefit by the experience of these countries and draw upon the vast stores of educational films which have been built up in Russia and the U.S.A. At the same time, it has to be remembered that our conditions differ in many respects and their experience will have to be modified to meet our requirements. I am glad to inform you that the Education Ministry has recently

3 established a Department of Social Education which will take up this problem. The expansion of the Department is, however, necessary in order to make it possible to provide such dramas, films and radio programmes in all Indian languages. I hope that very soon the Ministry will be able to publish complete plans and schemes for this purpose.

4 The problem of imparting literacy to adults must be taken up along with that of providing basic education to school-going children. For this purpose, we must not only depend upon the teachers who are engaged in such schools, but also call upon government employees of all categories to render such voluntary service as may be possible. This would be necessary, especially in the rural areas where it would not be possible to provide any alternative machinery for adult education. Government employees can render great help both in their spare time by working in night schools and Sunday schools, and also by their example in introducing a 'drive' for literacy among their own subordinates who are illiterate. A time must soon come when literacy will be made one of the conditions for any employment under the Government, and in the meantime, the Government are considering methods by which illiterate government servants may be encouraged to become literate.

5 I now come to the second broad problem which we have to discuss in this Conference today. This concerns the medium of instruction in the schools and colleges. You are already aware of my views on this question. I hold that there is no place for English as a medium of instruction in future India, but at the same time there should be no precipitate action that may damage the cause of education. I hold that the replacement of English as a medium of instruction should be gradual and stage by stage so that there is the least possible interruption or interference with the process of education in the country.

6 I think it is not necessary to raise the question of the medium of instruction in the primary and secondary stages. Opinion is unanimous that instruction in these stages can be imparted only through the mother tongue. Differences arise only when we come to the stage of education in the universities. Two sharply divided schools of thought hold the field. There are on the one hand those who want one common language as the medium of instruction for all the universities in India. There

7 is another school that holds that education in the universities should be imparted through the regional language. I realise that there are weighty arguments in favour of both the alternatives. The Central Advisory Board, which has just completed its session, has discussed this question and decided to appoint a committee of experts to go into it and submit recommendations. I have been asked to nominate the members of the committee and I will announce the names as soon as this Educational Conference is over.

8 I placed my own views before the Central Advisory Board and said that we should not change the medium of instruction in the university suddenly but allow a period of five years during which we can prepare for the gradual replacement of English by an Indian language. This would mean that by the sixth year, English would no longer be necessary as the medium of instruction in the universities and an Indian language could take its place. I am glad to inform you that the Board is in full agreement with this view.

One important problem in this connection is in respect of scientific terms, but the Central Advisory Board has tried to solve it by declaring that scientific terms are international, and it would be a serious mistake to try to translate them. I agree with the view of the Board and believe that this is the only rational solution of the difficulty.

9 I may here refer to the experience of other eastern countries which have already made the experiment of coining new words for scientific and technical terms or importing them from ancient classics. In Egypt the question of scientific terminology became important in the 19th century when she took to modern European education on a large scale. Egypt, as you are aware, has a rich classical language from which it can derive most of the scientific terms. In fact, Arabic possessed many terms in Astronomy, Chemistry, Physiology and other Sciences which have since been incorporated into the European languages. It was therefore easy for modern Egypt to coin new Arabic terms in the old moulds and one group in Egypt sought to adopt these Arabic terms for current use in Egyptian education. Many words were thus derived from the Arabic Classics and many new words coined, but experiment soon proved that this was not the happiest solution of the problem. With experience, the Egyptians were

convinced that the scientific terms in current usage in modern Europe should be adopted, as they have become international and do not now belong to any particular nation or country. Turkey and Iraq have also come to the conclusion that in matters of science and knowledge there should be no narrow nationalism but a truly international approach. Similar has been the experience of China and Japan. It must, however, be admitted that for certain technical terms, especially in Philosophy, Logic and Mathematics, many terms are already available in the Indian classical languages and we should certainly use them, especially as in their case there is not the same universal agreement as in the case of scientific terms.

12 The next problem I want you to consider is the question of reforms in university education. As I have already stated, there can be no question of narrow nationalism in the field of knowledge, but at the same time we must see that there is no wrong perspective of a nation's past history and culture nor a failure to encourage the highest ideals in national character and civilisation. Unfortunately, this has happened in India and I will draw your attention by way of example to the two particular instances of Philosophy and History.

13 To take up Philosophy first. Greek Philosophy was revived in Europe through the agency of the Arabs who were its commentators and critics during the Middle Ages. It was only during the Renaissance that direct translations were made from Greek and Latin. The result is that in Europe, even the general history of Philosophy starts with the Greeks and ends with modern European Philosophy, touching merely the fringe of Indian and Chinese thought. This is the history of Philosophy which the universities teach in India. But you will all admit that this does not represent the true facts of the development of philosophical thought in the world. No one today can deny the supreme achievements of the Indian mind in the realms of metaphysics and philosophy. It is true that recently Indian Philosophy has been introduced as one of the subjects of study in the Indian universities, but it has not yet gained the position which it deserves in the general history of the philosophy of the world.

14 One of the earliest schools of Greek Philosophy is that of Pythagoras. The tradition of his visit to India may or may not be true, but his philosophy shows unmistakable marks of the

influence of Indian thought. There is little doubt that the Indian mind had already advanced beyond the stage reached by Pythagoras. In fact, almost every school of Greek Philosophy has its counterpart in India. In addition, there are flashes of insight which we do not find in Greek Philosophy. I think that with the exception of two specific branches of learning, the Indian mind has shown itself superior in every respect to the achievements of the Greeks. The only two exceptions are in Logic and Astronomy. Aristotle's 'Logic' is superior in structure and scope to Indian 'Nyaya,' while in Astronomy Ptolemy's 'Majestic' is superior to Brahma Gupta's 'Siddhanta' and the work of Aryabhata. We therefore need a new history of Philosophy in which Indian Philosophy may find its rightful place.

Similarly in the field of History. Up to the time of Vincent Smith, there has been no reasonably true or correct History of India in English. Even Smith's History is defective and in many respects out of date. All histories used in our universities today reflect these defects. They suffer from both lacunae and distortions. Nothing is more important today than the reorientation of historical studies from the primary to the highest stages. This is a task which the universities must immediately undertake. The most practical method would be to prepare books in English which can then be translated into all the Indian languages. This would not only mean economy in labour but also give a uniformity in tone and treatment of the subject. I would therefore appeal to all the Indian universities to help in this noble task, and I can assure them that the Central Ministry will extend to them every possible help.

Another important question that I would like the Conference to consider is the study of the oriental languages and culture. We must admit that this has been most inadequate till now. I am sure there will be no difference of opinion that in the future we must make ample provision for remedying this defect. For this, two things are immediately necessary. We must, on the one hand, have a reform and simplification in the methods of teaching and, on the other, we must afford both encouragement and facility for such studies.

Even where oriental subjects have been taught in the universities, they have been treated in a most cavalier fashion. If we look at the plight of Sanskrit or any other of the classical languages

in the universities, we cannot deny that this has been done in a most half-hearted fashion in spite of the fact that such studies are essential for a true appreciation of Indian history and culture. What applies to Sanskrit, applies also to the study of Arabic and Persian.

17 I would like to draw your attention to the provision of facilities for the study of other oriental languages] as well and especially of Tibetan and Chinese. It is well known that many of the Buddhist scriptures and literature are preserved in Tibetan, though the original in Sanskrit has been lost. For instance the *Tarka Bhashya* of Mokshankar Gupta could not for long be obtained in Sanskrit but a Tibetan translation was available and till recently that constituted the only source of our access to his thought. It is only lately that the original has been found and published in the Gackwar Oriental Series.

20 The accounts of Chinese travellers are similar sources of illumination in respect of ancient India. Other treasures lie hidden] in the Chinese language and literature for the interpretation of our ancient history, if only they were accessible to us. For these reasons it is essential that our universities must provide adequate facilities for the study of these oriental languages. We must not forget that in the past, India was a centre where the currents of Asiatic thought met and from which flowed out streams which spread to the farthest corner of the Asiatic continent. To appreciate Ancient India truly it is therefore essential to have a knowledge and understanding of other Asiatic languages and cultures as well.] 20  $\frac{3}{4}$

## SOCIAL EDUCATION

7/5  
(120) PM L Some time ago I made an announcement that a section of Social Education has been opened in the Ministry of Education. This Section is concerned with the preparation of plans for imparting social education to the Indian people. With the introduction of adult franchise the necessity of such education has become even more pressing than before. It is necessary that I should explain to the public the scope and purpose of the programme that we have taken in hand.

There is at present a great deal of confusion about the meaning of the terms Social Education, Social Welfare and Adult Education. In order to remove this the concept of social education must be clearly defined so that we may go ahead with the programmes that have been accepted in this Ministry.

At the outset, let me make it clear that social education is not merely a study of Sociology. Sociology is the science of social phenomena and in its wider meaning covers advanced studies like Economics, Politics, Anthropology, Jurisprudence, etc. Sociology is a branch of theoretic knowledge which systematises a certain type of facts and tries to establish the laws of social inter-actions, relations and developments. By social education is meant something which has an immediately practical bearing.

2 Nor is social education synonymous with social welfare. Social welfare is primarily an activity directed towards the removal of the many disabilities and evils from which individuals or groups suffer under existing social conditions; thus, the provision of amenities for labour class population or work among drug addicts or attempts to enforce social hygiene are examples of social welfare work. Social education may lead to such activities but must not be confused with them.

Social education may therefore be defined as a course of study towards the production of a consciousness of citizenship among the people and the promotion of social solidarity among them. For this, it is obvious that there must be some knowledge of

social conditions, but it is not necessary to have detailed acquaintance with sociological laws which the study of Economics or Politics requires. Its affinity with adult education is more immediate. We may say that adult education has three aspects, namely, (a) the induction of literacy among grown-up illiterates, (b) the production of an educated mind in the masses in the absence of literary education, (c) the inculcation of a lively sense of rights and duties of citizenship, both as individuals and as members of a mighty nation. We may say that social education is synonymous with adult education, but lays more emphasis upon the two latter aspects of education.

For developing a sense of citizenship and producing an educated mind, the following seem essential :

(a) Every citizen must know the meaning of citizenship and the way democracy functions. He should have not only some knowledge of the history and geography of the country but also of its social conditions. In order to fulfil his duties as a citizen, he must also have some acquaintance with the working of the State. With the introduction of adult franchise, it is imperative for every voter to know the meaning of the vote. He should be instructed that in parliamentary democracy, the government is responsible to him, and his vote therefore is not merely a valuable right but also a great obligation. Much of the necessary knowledge in such matters can be imparted by verbal methods. In the case of illiterate adults it is obvious that the emphasis must be on the spoken word rather than on written texts.

(b) There must also be instruction in the laws of personal and public health. True citizenship implies knowledge of and respect for the laws which govern the health of the community. At present, in India, there is often emphasis on certain rituals of personal cleanliness, accompanied by colossal ignorance of and indifference to the laws of social health. One of the main purposes of social education must be to train people in clean and healthy living. This will involve information about ventilation and accommodation in houses, disposal of refuse, some rudimentary ideas of drainage and consideration for the convenience of neighbours and other members of the public.

(c) Social education must also mean the imparting of such



information to the people as will enable them to effect some improvement in their economic status. [This is necessary not only to rouse an interest among the adult illiterates in the course of study but also from the point of view of the community itself. It is obvious that adults will take a more immediate and active interest in anything which promises improvement in their economic status. Arrangements will therefore be made for training in a craft or the introduction of better techniques in existing crafts, and for improving general efficiency of the men.]

(d) Social education, involving as it does the improvement of bodily and mental health, cannot ignore the proper training and refinement of the emotions. Art and literature are the instruments of this training. Folk music, drama, dance, poetry and recreative activities must be included in a scheme of social education.

(e) Social education should also contain an element of instruction in a universal ethic, with special emphasis upon the necessity of toleration of one another's differences in a democracy. In a way, this will be included in the course of training under (a), but, in addition, there should be a special attention devoted to the inculcation of tolerance, mutual appreciation and universal principles of right conduct.

A comprehensive programme of education on these lines will have to be undertaken for the whole of the Indian Union. We cannot, however, overlook that there are financial and other difficulties which make the execution of such a plan extremely difficult. I feel that we should therefore start the experiment in some selected area and, as we gather experience, extend the scope of our programme to other areas. Since it has been decided to start the programme of basic education in Delhi Province from the 1st of July, I propose that the scheme of social education should also first be tried out there. The fact that Delhi is a small province and is also directly administered by the Central Government will make it easier to carry out the experiment in this area.

It is necessary that the basic school buildings and staff should be utilised to the fullest possible extent by serving as schools for children in the morning, adolescent schools and clubs for young people in the afternoon and education centres for adults in the

evening. Our programme cannot be completely successful unless the basic schools sponsored by the Government are also centres for the life of the entire village community. It will be necessary to provide a fair proportion of games and group activities for the adolescents as otherwise their interest in instruction is likely to flag. Similarly in the case of adults, the emphasis will be more on social education than on mere literacy, and this will be imparted through visual, aural and oral methods.

10 The importance of adequate methods of visual and aural education for adolescents and adults need not be stressed. The Government of India intend to encourage the production of folk drama and rural plays by the villagers themselves. Prizes for the purpose may be given from time to time and competitions held between different villages or local units. Films can also play a great part in teaching the lessons of citizenship, social responsibility, personal health, public hygiene, physical drill and other matters of immediate benefit to the community. The radio is also a powerful instrument of aural education, and I have under consideration plans for full utilisation of both the films and the radio.

11 I need hardly say that all our educational programme will ultimately depend upon the proper education of women. If women take to education, more than half of our problems will be solved. Educated mothers will mean children who can be easily made literate. From the point of view of expense and management, it would have been simplest if men and women could be taught through the same agencies. I know, however, that the existing conditions in India will not permit this. At the same time our finances will not allow a complete duplication of the whole apparatus for teaching men and women separately. I would therefore suggest that for the basic schools, that is, for children between the ages of 6 and 11, the institutions might be co-educational. For the adolescents, the solution is to set apart certain days in the week for girls and boys. I would suggest that 12 three days in the week may be reserved for girls when the school centres will be entirely at their disposal. For grown-up women, we may reserve two days in the week for a similar purpose. I know that this is not a perfect solution but in the existing conditions I feel that in this way alone we can meet the demand for the necessary social education to be given to adolescent girls and

grown-up women within the limitations of our financial and other resources.

The programme of universal education for Delhi will therefore be as follows :

- (1) The village school will be a centre not only of instruction but also of sports and recreation for the entire village.
- 13 (2) Separate time will be allotted to children, adolescents and grown-ups.
- (3) Certain days in the week will be reserved exclusively for girls and women.
- (4) A number of motor vans fitted with projectors and loud-speakers are now being secured; these will visit the village school when film and magic lantern shows will be given and recorded talks played. It is proposed that each school will be visited at least once a week.
- (5) Schools will be provided with radio sets and arrangements made for broadcasting special programmes for school children, adolescents and grown-up people in the light of the scheme of social education sketched above. About 140 sets have already been provided by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and it is proposed to supply the balance of 150 radio sets as early as possible.
- (6) Popular drama will be organised in the school and from time to time prizes given for the best plays produced.
- (7) There will be provision for teaching national and community songs.
- 14 (8) Arrangements will be made for simple instruction to be given in some craft or industry suited to the locality.
- (9) Lectures will be arranged in co-operation with the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Labour to instruct villagers in the simple laws of social hygiene, methods of agriculture, cottage industries and co-operative activities.
- (10) In co-operation with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, suitable films and slides will be shown from time to time. Arrangements will also be made for visits of public men from time to time to speak to the villagers on problems of national importance and the help and assistance of public bodies interested in

constructive work will be welcomed to give effect to the programme of social education.

- (11) Arrangements will be made for organising group games and competitions will be held from time to time between different schools and villages.□
- (12) Exhibitions and fairs and excursions will be organised from time to time.

## INDIAN ART THROUGH THE AGES

I am grateful to you for the interest you have taken in this Exhibition of Indian Art and the readiness with which you accepted our invitation to open it. Organised by the Ministry of Education, this Exhibition is the first of its kind in India. I am sure you will agree with me that no programme of national education is complete unless it can provide an appropriate place to national art. The present Exhibition is a recognition of this fact and marks the first step towards the goal which the Ministry of Education has set before itself.

The most significant characteristic of this Exhibition is that it opens before us a vista of five thousand years of Indian History in all its continuity and wealth. Its value for educational purposes can therefore be easily grasped. It will, I think, be proper to describe briefly the manner in which the exhibits in this collection were chosen.

The Royal Academy of Art in London has been taking a special interest in Oriental Art since before the War. In 1931, the Academy organised the exhibition of Iranian Art and in 1935 that of the Art of China. After the War was over, it proposed that a similar exhibition of Indian Art should be held. The Government of India warmly welcomed the idea and assured the Royal Academy of every possible help. Accordingly, it was proposed to hold the exhibition of Indian Art in London.

It had been decided that the principle governing the selection of exhibits should be that they would represent the art of India both from its historical and its artistic aspect. Art objects in India are scattered all over the country. Some are in the possession of the Central Government, some are with the provinces and some in the Indian States. There are in addition many rare specimens in the ownership of private individuals. It was therefore necessary that specialists in art should examine all collections carefully and make their selection. A committee was formed for the purpose with Mrs. Sarojini Naidu (now Her Excellency the

Governor of U.P.) as Chairman. Three experts from England came to serve on the Committee. They toured all over the country and after careful examination chose about 1000 exhibits which were sent to England in 239 cases.

The exhibition opened in London at the Burlington House on December 1, 1947, and continued till February 1948.

The exhibition in London fulfilled the purpose for which the collections had been made, and the time came for the return of the exhibits. The Ministry of Education, however, felt that before the exhibits were dispersed, they should once be exhibited in India. Such a collection of art objects cannot be assembled every day. The London exhibition was held after a selection had been made from all collections of art in the country. It was, in fact, the finest ensemble of specimens of Indian Art and offered most valuable aid to the study of the nation's history. A lesson to refresh our memory about our past has never been more necessary than in the phase through which we are passing today after the achievement of independence. It was therefore decided not to disperse the exhibits till an exhibition had been held in India towards the end of the year.

The next point for decision was the choice of a suitable venue for the exhibition. We needed a place where about a thousand art objects of different types could be shown to the best possible advantage. The building also had to be such as would satisfy the requirements of an art exhibition. Inevitably I thought of the spacious State Rooms of Government House. Whenever I see the splendid Hall, the thought that comes uppermost to my mind is : What a wonderful Library or Museum it would make ? My feelings find an echo in the words which the Persian poet attributed to the fire-worshipper when he saw Kaaba (the great Mosque of Mecca) and exclaimed :

*In Khana Badin Khoobi Atashkadah Bayaste.*

(What a beautiful house ! It should have been a fire-temple.)

Your Excellency, I am thankful to you that you responded warmly as soon as the suggestion was made, and placed this section of Government House at the disposal of the Ministry of Education. It is through your courtesy that we are holding this splendid Exhibition in this magnificent Hall.

The Archaeological Department of the Ministry of Education was charged with all the arrangements for the Exhibition. An

Executive Committee was formed with the Education Secretary as Chairman and the Director General of Archaeology as Secretary. The work was difficult and arduous and demanded meticulous care. I have great pleasure in expressing my thanks to the various Civil and Defence Departments whose officers have worked so enthusiastically and promptly rendered every service that was demanded of them. I have no hesitation in saying that to them belongs the main credit for the success of this Exhibition.

I will now briefly describe to you the main features of this Exhibition which covers a wide range of art from all over the country from 3,000 B.C. to the 19th century A.D. It has been divided into five sections, viz., Sculptures, Bronze Images, Paintings, Textiles and other minor arts.

The sculpture section includes statuary, domestic objects and jewellery from the time of the Indus Valley civilization right up to the modern age. I may mention the Bull Capital of the 3rd century B.C., a splendid specimen of Asokan Art, and a female chauri-bearer from Patna of the 3rd century B.C., with bright Mauryan polish, which is a unique specimen of its kind. There are beautiful female figures from Mathura in red sandstone, a magnificent standing Buddha of the 5th century and some beautiful sculptures from the temples of Orissa and Mysore of the 11th-12th century.

The art of Indian bronzes is represented in the Exhibition by first rate specimens available in the country. There is the world famous figure of the 12th century Nataraja or Siva in the cosmic dance. A continuous history of Indian bronzes from the well-known bronze dancing girl of Mohen-jo-daro to figures from Taxila, Bengal, Western India and Madras is also presented here.

The painting section consists of about 350 specimens and represents all the main schools of Indian paintings, viz., the Pala School of Bengal, Gujarati School of Western India, Rajasthani School of Rajputana and Central India, Pahari School of the sub-Himalayan Hill States, the Mughal School and the Deccani School. The Pala School shows several of the earliest palm-leaf manuscripts of the 11th century. The collection of Gujarati paintings includes some rare items. In the Rajasthani paintings are shown a series of Ragamalas in brilliant colours from the collection of Treasurywala, which have already been purchased

for the National Museum. These are being exhibited to the public for the first time. The Kangra paintings of the 18th century, the best period of the school, are fully represented by outstanding pictures of the Krishna Lila. Amongst miniatures of the Mughal School, a very representative selection has been brought together, including a hitherto unknown painting on cloth of the Hamzanama, five paintings from the Razmnama (the Persian translation of the Mahabharata), a page from the Darabnama, two pages of Tarikh-i-Alfi, eight leaves from the Iyari-Danish, all well-known book-illustrations executed in the reign of Akbar. A unique set of Ragamala paintings in mixed Rajput-Mughal style of Jahangir's period, in which Jahangir himself appears, is one of the highlights of the Exhibition. Remarkable portraits of Jahangir, Shahjahan and other grandees are also shown. Several rare manuscripts with excellent calligraphy form part of this section. There is a manuscript with the seal of Hamida Banu Begum, mother of Akbar, and a Quran written in 1781 A.D. for Nawab Asaf-ud-Dawlah of Oudh, lent by the Rampur State Library. Two large-sized paintings showing Chand Bibi and her maidens and Abdullah Qutb Shah in procession are the most outstanding examples of the Deccani School.

Amongst textiles, first-rate specimens of silk saris, embroidered and with gold brocade, have been assembled, including figured saris of Baluchar, Murshidabad, brocade saris of Chanderi, Ahmedabad, Aurangabad, Surat and Tanjore. A very remarkable specimen of tie-and-dye design showing shikargah and garba dance in dotted pattern is a masterpiece of art from Gujarat.

Amongst minor arts two ivory door leaves from Mysore, jade-handled daggers and swords of the Mughal period and a unique shield of Akbar, with a sun symbol in the centre and twelve signs of the zodiac damascened in gold, are of outstanding interest.

Much has been and more will be said about the ancient objects of art. The characteristic which appears most remarkable to me is its historical significance. A nation's art is a visible representation of its history. Annals recorded in writing tell us of the past but cannot make it visible to us. Art, on the contrary, not only tells us of the past but makes it live before our vision. We look at statues and forms, and grasp the history of centuries



in minutes. One statue of Apollo or Venus can give us a greater insight into the life and mentality of the Greeks than five thousand pages of writing. You will find in this Exhibition a wonderful standing Buddha of the 5th century. If you stand before it for a few minutes and listen to the silent discourse of the stone, you will learn more about the history of ancient India in a few seconds than you could from hundreds of pages written by the most competent of historians.

There is another aspect of equal importance in an exhibition of this type. Art is an education of the emotions and is thus an essential element in any scheme of truly national education. Education, whether at the secondary or at the university stage, cannot be regarded as complete if it does not train our faculties to the perception of beauty. I must confess that art education has been sadly neglected in our country, whether as a repository of ancient history or an embodiment of the visions of beauty that have moved men. No doubt, students are sometimes taken and sometimes they themselves go to museums like the Indian Museum at Calcutta and other museums in Jaipur, Mysore or Hyderabad. Such visits are, however, perfunctory and occasional, and there is no effort to integrate the study of art into the scheme of our general studies. The Ministry of Education have proposals in hand which will lead to the enrichment of our life through the integration of art in education, both secondary and university, but the implementation of the plans will take some time. I would therefore request you to look upon the present Exhibition as an earnest of our future plans. I hope and trust that this will not only awaken in all of us a more lively sense of our past, and pride and joy in its ancient traditions, but also lead to a quickening of our sensibility so that we may bring more of beauty and grace in the affairs of our daily life.

Your Excellency, I have great pleasure in requesting you to open this Exhibition of Indian Art through the ages.

## INDIAN ART AND CULTURE

12/5 100  
It gives me immense pleasure this afternoon to be in the midst of you, the custodians of Indian art and culture. You are all engaged in the reconstruction of the country through the monuments of history and art that are housed in various museums in this country. It is true, we have not been able to utilise these resources for the advancement of our education and culture. During the period of about 150 years of foreign domination we had no facilities to attend to the work of our cultural uplift. Now that we are the masters of our own destiny it is our foremost duty to set our house in order, some portion of which is in such ruin that it is beyond repairs, while a few corners are still in a position to be used after repairs. The work that you have before you is to put our old house in proper order.

National education is the most important item of national life. The exhibits that are stored in our museums are a permanent source of knowledge. No scheme of national education can claim to attain perfection unless art education finds a place in it. Unfortunately our art treasures are scattered in various collections and are lying in the most neglected condition. It is therefore absolutely essential to bring together all such art treasures, and display them in a scientific manner. To achieve this aim, we must have a National Museum, supplying a haven for our artistic heritage.

When we glance at the cultural history of the world, we find that most of the countries commence their history not earlier than the 8th or 7th century B.C. India, Egypt, and China, however, can trace their history from most ancient times. Our culture is at least 5000 years old, nay, in some cases we have a story of 7000 years to tell. It is a proud privilege of ours to be the inhabitants of one of the most ancient countries of the world. As a free nation, now it is most essential for us to take care of our national heritage and recognise the importance of our institutions that are doing cultural work. In spite of the attainment of

*Inaugural speech at the annual session of the Museums Association of India, Delhi, December 27, 1948*

freedom, India is unfortunately passing through critical times. Financial stringency is impeding important schemes of national reconstruction. All the same I may assure you that our Government is desirous of helping all nation building activities like those of yours.

4 The development of the National Museum is an important part of our nation building programme. As Mr. Gyani has just pointed out, we cannot afford to look upon our museums as mere godowns of antiquities or curio houses. Museology is a highly developed science in other countries. But we, in India, are far behind in this respect. According to my idea a museum must display lifeless relics of the past as living objects presenting a coherent picture of our glorious past.

5 I would request the organisers of this Conference to keep constantly in view the need of linking up our art heritage with the spread of education. The National Museum can play an important part in educating the masses and the scholars alike. Such a museum should be an imperishable record-house for our ancient history and civilisation. It will tell us the story of our life and culture in the past. We cannot think of a greater source of national pride. We have been thinking of establishing a national museum for sometime. We hoped that it would be possible to go ahead with the scheme after the termination of World War II but unfortunately inflation and an economic crisis of unprecedented magnitude have stood in the way of achieving our objective. Even in these conditions we have been allotting some money for the purchase of exhibits for the proposed National Museum from year to year and we hope to make a further provision for it in the coming budget.

6 During the past two hundred years, Indian art objects have found their way to foreign countries in very large numbers and we are distressed to note that owing to the poverty and ignorance of the people important art objects and records have gone out of India. We must send a commission to survey and catalogue our national treasures in foreign countries. It is also necessary that art objects in private collections of this country should be surveyed. There is every possibility that even an unassuming cottage may contain treasures important from the historical point of view. Thousands of documents and manuscripts are lying uncared for in this country. Now that the reins of Govern-

ment are in the hands of our own people, our appeal will certainly reach the masses and create a consciousness among them regarding the importance of protecting and preserving our antiquities. We should appeal to our people from this platform to present such things, if they happen to possess any, to the nation by depositing them in a provincial or National Museum or to the National Archives if they are records. This will afford the scholars an opportunity to sift unpublished records and find out their historical or artistic importance. 8

The Government proposes to appoint two commissions to collect art objects in this country, and buy those that have gone out. With a view to attaining the modern standard in museum management I would also like to depute some students to foreign museums. These trained curators can then show us how our museums could best be used for the education of our people. There are many precious things of national importance in the museums of England, France, Holland and other countries. We should try to obtain them if possible. There are also many rare manuscripts and important records in our country that can throw valuable light on our past, that are being destroyed through neglect. They must be saved and preserved in a scientific manner. Let me assure you that your Association can always count upon the fullest support from me and my Department. Your work will not suffer on account of our apathy. I cannot, however, make a long speech and give you high hopes as vague hopes and empty pockets do not go well together. 9

In the end, I cannot help expressing my great pleasure that a change of outlook has come about in our people and they are becoming more and more aware and conscious of the cultural value of our antiquities. I was most impressed by the response of the people to the Art Exhibition in Government House which had to be extended till the end of March next year on account of popular demand. With the ushering of freedom our minds have also become free. It is therefore the right time for the members of your Association to carry on the task of educating the people through your art galleries. The Government is now your own and you can surely expect the fullest co-operation and encouragement for the laudable efforts of your organisations. 11

With these few words, I express my gratitude to you for having called upon me to associate myself with the important educational

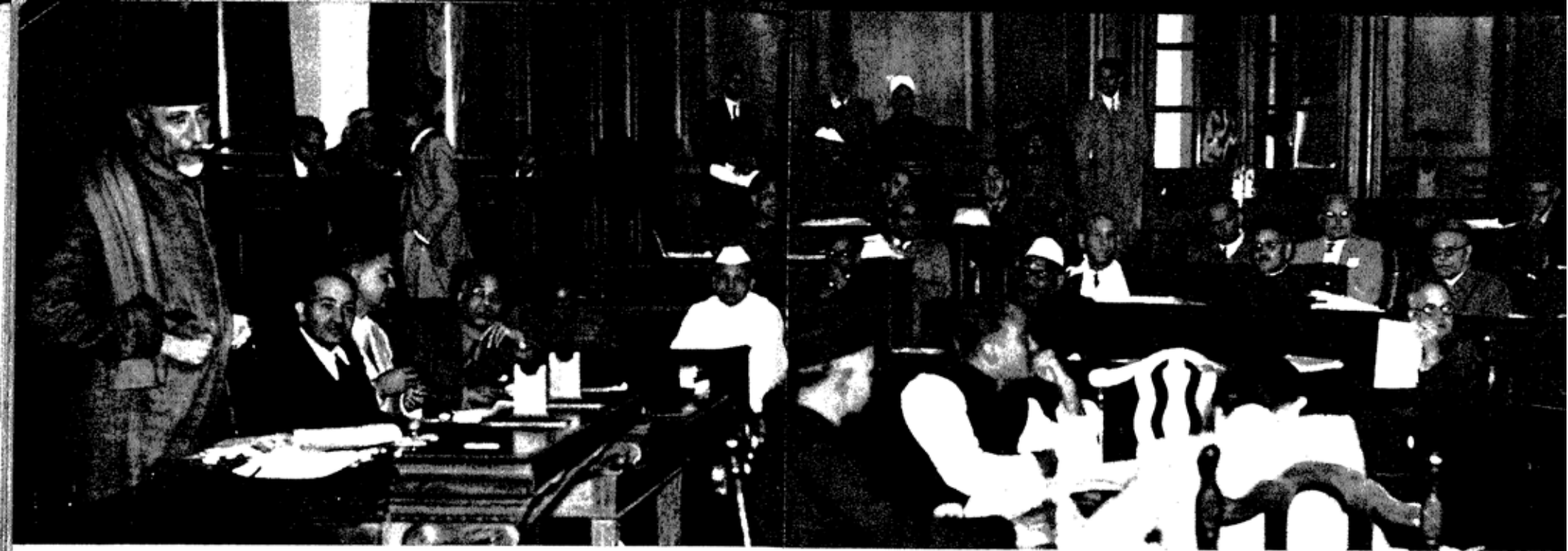
and cultural activities of your Association to inaugurate the proceedings of this Conference. ]

12

-7



*At a public meeting near Jama Masjid, Delhi, January 1948*



*Addressing the All India Educational Conference, New Delhi, January 1948*



*Delivering the Presidential Address at the Silver Jubilee Session of the  
Indian Historical Records Commission, New Delhi, December 1948*



## STUDY OF INDIAN HISTORY

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this 25th Anniversary of the Indian Historical Records Commission. During these 25 years, the Commission has done valuable work of which you will find a brief record in the Souvenir prepared by our Director of Archives. I would only like to place on record our appreciation of the services rendered by many colleagues who are no more in our midst and also to welcome new members of the fraternity of historians who preserve our past through their devoted and disinterested work. I am particularly glad that on this occasion we have among us representatives of other countries. The aim of history is to find out the truth about the past. This is a common human quest and the presence of members of different nations is a testimony that such tasks can be carried out only through the co-operative efforts of men and women regardless of race, religion or nationality. ①

Twenty-five years is not a long period judged by the standard of history and yet the Indian Historical Records Commission has done valuable work in creating a new spirit of research and enquiry among our historians. Members of the Commission have contributed much to our knowledge of Indian past. They have also created a spirit of enthusiasm abroad and we have had in consequence many valuable studies by foreign scholars on various aspects of Indian history. The field, however, is vast and in spite of all our efforts we have been able to accomplish only a fraction of our task. It is therefore essential for us to renew our endeavour and continually make greater efforts so that the resplendent past of India may be discovered to us and the world. ②

The Historical Records Commission has till now surveyed the problems of history in a general way. Individual authors have contributed important studies in subjects of their choice. Valuable as such work has been, I feel that it would perhaps be of even greater service to the cause of historical research if we frame a programme of work to fill up the gaps in our knowledge ③

of the history of India. No one can deny that many problems are yet outstanding and demand further enquiry and investigation. By way of example, I would draw special attention of the historians assembled here to periods which, in my opinion, should be studied more carefully if we are to appreciate fully all the implications of our heritage.

④ Our ancient past dates back to pre-history and presents many periods that are only imperfectly known. The relation of the civilisation of Mohenjo-daro to that of Southern India or to lands in the Middle East is yet unsolved. The recent excavations in Bahrein and Kowait have brought to light numerous small tombs which date back to perhaps the second millennium before Christ or even earlier. Some historians find in them evidence of ancient connections between South India and the regions bordering on the Persian Gulf. Some of these problems are no doubt purely archaeological, but there are others which can be solved only by the co-operation of the archaeologists and the historians. The services of Syriology and Egyptology have not yet been fully utilised in explaining our ancient past. Nor have we yet explored the materials that have come down to us from the civilisations that flourished in Mesopotamia and the neighbouring lands.

⑤ Another period in Indian history which deserves and demands fresh and detailed study is the end of the first millennium after Christ. We have some knowledge of the condition of India up to the 7th and 8th century A.D. and again after the establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi. The intervening period saw the rise of the Ghuznavide power and its expansion into the north western regions of India, but we have no clear picture of the social and political conditions of India during this time. It is unfortunate that we have not yet been able to lay our hands on all the Persian histories of the period whose names have been handed down to us. Abul Fazal Baihaqi, we are told, wrote a history of the Ghuznavides in thirty volumes, but we have so far found only a fragment of this book. Perhaps new light would be thrown on the Indian history if the lost volumes could be recovered. Some new material has, however, been discovered recently and they are bound to throw further light on our knowledge of this period. ⑥ It is also somewhat strange that almost all our historical research and studies for even a later period are based on Persian records and entirely overlook material that is hid in the vastness of the

Arabian history and literature. Our historians should turn to the field and examine the Arabic sources for information about the trade, commerce and social and political conditions of India during this period.

9 The decline and fall of the Moghul Empire is a matter of comparatively recent history and yet even this period has not been fully studied or thoroughly understood. One surprising feature of this age is the lack of historians of note within the country itself. The work of foreign historians gives a picture which is full of confusion. To take only one example. Most of the foreign historians speak of the anarchy and lawlessness of the period and yet they are full of praise for the administration of individual rulers. While on the one hand it is said that India was in turmoil and there was neither law nor order, we are on the other hand told that the administration of Alivardi Khan, Zalim Singh or Ahalya Bai compared favourably with that of the European countries of the day. 9 On the one hand there is the condemnation of Hyder Ali as a tyrant and on the other high praise for his achievements in the arts of administration and peace. We are also told that there was free movement of hundies or bills of credit which held currency from the borders of Bengal up to the limits of Central Asia. How is one to explain the financial stability and credit implied in such transactions against the background of political anarchy painted by political historians? Without venturing on any hypothesis, I would be content to say that in spite of plenitude of material the period has not yet been fully studied and will repay the care and attention of scholars. 10

Another period which we must study afresh is that of British connection with India. The wealth of material for this period is immense and yet it must be admitted that we do not have a fair and balanced study of the period in all its aspects. There have been protagonists of the Empire who have sought to justify everything that the British did and painted the period in golden colours. Political passion has on the other hand sometimes led Indians to condemn the period outright as one of the dark ages of India's history. So long as the political conflict was not resolved, it was difficult to judge the period with the detachment of a true historian. Now, however, the chapter of British domination is closed and the time has come when Indians must study it without prejudice or passion.

I would now like to say a few words about our National Archives. They are the storehouse of the raw materials of history and the Historical Records Commission is the agency which should find the best possible use for them. Today only a fraction of our records are available to us in the National Archives, but scattered throughout the land there are family documents, *sanads*, *firman*s and ancient manuscripts which will be lost unless they are acquired without delay. The present is also the opportune moment to appeal to the public to hand over such documents to the National Government. Such appeal will meet with a readier response now than perhaps at any other time.

Many things must be done to make our National Archives perform their proper functions. Of these, the collection and preservation of records and manuscripts is perhaps the foremost. Records dispersed throughout the provinces and states must be brought to one common centre and steps taken to ensure their proper care. The climate of India is an enemy of all types of documents and air-conditioning is essential if records and manuscripts are to be maintained in a proper state of preservation. The importance of this task can be judged from the fact that once such manuscripts are lost, there is no way of replacing them.

The second task is that of cataloguing and analysis of such records. It is hardly necessary to emphasise to a gathering of historians and archivists the urgency of such work. Without proper use of the manuscripts, they may as well not exist. And yet we have to admit that even the records which are already in our possession have not all been catalogued.

The Government are alive to the importance of both these tasks and the Ministry of Education has been endeavouring to do everything possible to achieve them. You are, however, aware of the financial difficulties through which we are passing at the moment. This may prevent us from carrying out all that we intend, but I may assure you that the Ministry will not spare any effort to achieve whatever is possible in the present difficult conditions and to expand its programme as soon as conditions improve.

The programme of publications has in spite of financial and other difficulties been accelerated. New machinery is being set up and steps are being taken to expand the capacity and scope of our National Archives. We also intend to go ahead as quickly

as possible with the installation of the airconditioning plant so that the preservation of the precious heritage of our past may be assured.

I must not, however, go into greater details. It is for you, historians and archivists, to prepare a programme of work. Let your labours yield material for writing a full history of India throughout the ages, in which the story of co-operation and common endeavour, the development of civilisation and culture and the growth of arts, philosophy, religion and humanity will be told in all their wealth. That and not the mere record of wars and conflicts, of dynasties and kings, is the true history of India.

## NATIONAL EDUCATION AND FINANCE

110  
[Twelve months have passed since we met last in Delhi. That was the first meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education held after the achievement of independence. Naturally we were full of enthusiasm and wanted to proceed with our programme of educational expansion as rapidly as possible. It was in this spirit that the Ministry of Education went ahead with its schemes and prepared a programme for realising our long cherished plan of expansion of education for the country.

1  
2  
You are, I am sure, aware of the sudden deterioration in the economic condition of the country which faced us during the latter half of the year. The danger of inflation and a rising spiral of prices grew so great that the Cabinet was compelled to reconsider the position and appoint an Economy Committee. That Committee recommended a drastic cut in the expenditure of all the Ministries and pressed that all development programmes must be suspended or at least slowed down. I realise the importance of economy, but at the same time feel that education is a matter which cannot brook suspension or even delay. Nevertheless, as the economic situation grew graver, the Cabinet was forced to give precedence to the resolution of the financial crisis over all other activities of the Government. Much against my will, I therefore agreed to slowing down the tempo of our educational development but insisted that, as soon as there was some improvement in the situation, education must be one of our first priorities for the resumption of the full development programme.

Even with this slowing down, the present position marks a great improvement on the conditions that prevailed before 1947. Before the attainment of independence the education budget of the Government of India was in the neighbourhood of Rs. 2 crore. The first financial year of independence has been a perceptible expansion in the education budget and the next year's budget—

*At the 15th Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, Allahabad, January 7, 1949*

in spite of financial difficulties and drastic economy—will be well over twice the amount of pre-independence days. I am glad to say that the New Year has brought with it a gleam of brighter days. I am hoping that I will soon be in a position to announce that the Government would go full steam ahead with the programme of expanding the National Education in all its stages. 3

The first and foremost task of the National Government is the provision of free and compulsory basic education for all. In your last meeting, you stressed its urgency. This was reiterated by the All India Educational Conference which met immediately thereafter. You will remember that I pointed out to the Conference that the 40 years' programme laid down in the Report of the Central Advisory Board seemed too long and should be reduced. I also suggested that its programme of construction of school houses required fresh scrutiny in order to bring the expenditure within the limits of our financial capacity. I am glad to say that the Conference accepted both the suggestions and recommended that an expert committee should be appointed to go into the question in order to suggest ways and means for reducing the period and the cost of buildings. Accordingly, a committee of experts under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble B. G. Kher was appointed and it has submitted its interim report. According to this report, universal compulsory basic education can be introduced within a period of 16 years by two five-year and one six-year plans. The first five-year plan will aim at bringing that education to a major portion of the children of the country within the age-group of 6-11. The second five-year plan will extend compulsion to the remaining children of the same age-group so that at the end of ten years all children between the ages of 6-11 will be under compulsory instruction. The six-year plan will then extend the scope of compulsion to 14 so that at the end of 16 years the programme of 8 years' basic education for children between 6-14, as envisaged by the Central Advisory Board, will be completely realised. 4 5 6

The Committee also went into the question of finances and suggested that the Centre should provide 30 per cent of the expenses while the provinces and local bodies should find the remaining 70 per cent. The following table shows the total expenses that would be incurred from year to year :

| Year    |    |    | Expenditure<br>on compulsory<br>education | Incidental<br>expenditure         | Total<br>expenditure |
|---------|----|----|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
|         |    |    | Rs.                                       | Rs.                               | Rs.                  |
| 1949-50 | .. | .. | 9,38,38,000                               | 4,69,19,000<br>50% of col.<br>(2) | 14,07,57,000         |
| 1950-51 | .. | .. | 19,03,34,000                              | 7,61,33,600<br>40% of col.<br>(2) | 26,64,67,600         |
| 1951-52 | .. | .. | 29,26,57,000                              | 8,77,97,100<br>30% of col.<br>(2) | 38,04,54,100         |
| 1952-53 | .. | .. | 39,85,66,000                              | 7,97,13,200<br>20% of col.<br>(2) | 47,82,79,200         |
| 1953-54 | .. | .. | 50,84,25,000                              | 5,08,42,500<br>10% of col.<br>(2) | 55,92,67,500         |
| 1954-55 | .. | .. | 77,15,88,000                              | ..                                | 77,15,88,000         |
| 1955-56 | .. | .. | 104,73,44,000                             | ..                                | 104,73,44,000        |
| 1956-57 | .. | .. | 133,35,90,000                             | ..                                | 133,35,90,000        |
| 1957-58 | .. | .. | 154,95,58,000                             | ..                                | 154,95,58,000        |
| 1958-59 | .. | .. | 177,87,21,000                             | ..                                | 177,87,21,000        |
| 1959-60 | .. | .. | 202,63,63,000                             | ..                                | 202,63,63,000        |
| 1960-61 | .. | .. | 226,34,00,000                             | ..                                | 226,34,00,000        |
| 1961-62 | .. | .. | 251,25,38,000                             | ..                                | 251,25,38,000        |
| 1962-63 | .. | .. | 263,48,36,000                             | ..                                | 263,48,36,000        |
| 1963-64 | .. | .. | 276,32,49,000                             | ..                                | 276,32,49,000        |
| 1964-65 | .. | .. | 288,36,93,000                             | ..                                | 288,36,93,000        |

1. These figures take account only of the provinces and exclude the States.

2. Incidental expenses are included to cover (i) the cost of increased salaries of teachers in existing schools, (ii) the cost of educating older children who may join the new schools, and (iii) the other expenses which would follow from the increase in the number of pupils at all stages. This percentage has been



reduced year by year for the reason that as more and more students are covered by the compulsory scheme the excess of expenditure is bound to decrease.

3. These figures have been calculated on the basis that compulsion will be applied to 40 per cent of the age-group 6-7 during 1949-50 and advanced year by year so that at the end of the first five years 40 per cent of the age-group 6-11 will be under compulsion. The second five-year plan will start with compulsion for the whole of the age-group 6-7 and 40 per cent of the age-group 7-11. Here also compulsion will be extended year by year so that at the end of second five-year plan compulsion will be applied to the whole of the age-group 6-11. During the six-year plan, compulsion will be applied in the first year to 50 per cent of the children in the age-group 11-12 and extended year by year so that at the end of three years there will be compulsion for 50 per cent of all children in the age-group 11-14. The second three years will extend compulsion to the remaining children till in six years all children in the age-group of 11-14 are brought under compulsion.

7 The Ministry of Education have accepted this interim report and tried to provide funds in our next year's budget on that basis. In view of the economic and financial dangers to which I have already referred, it has not, however, been possible to provide for the entire amount. Much against my will, I have been compelled to agree to a proposal to postpone the consideration of this scheme for the time being. One factor which weighed with me was that the Central contribution would be effective only if the provinces are in a position to provide their share of the expenses. The financial position of the country makes one doubt if the provinces can find the necessary funds. It has been decided to consider the question again sometime before March to find out how far we can carry out the plan. The Government have, however, provided funds for the training of teachers so that, as soon as the economic situation improves, we can go ahead with the programme of basic education.

8 We all realise the importance of basic education for the future welfare of the State. Equally important for immediate progress is adult education. In a democracy, the provision of such education is all the more necessary as without an educated electorate democracy cannot perform the functions expected of it. For this, we want not merely literacy, but mental development of the adults so that they can take an intelligent interest in the affairs of their country and the world. The scope of adult education has therefore been extended and to mark this change it is proposed to call it social education in future. The committee which you appointed to prepare a scheme of adult education for the country

has submitted its report and has also suggested this change of name. The Government have generally accepted the recommendations of the Committee and I am glad to announce that, in spite of inflation and its attendant financial difficulties, we have been able to provide funds in the next year's budget for the implementation of the plan.]

I am also glad to inform you that a beginning has been made in the Province of Delhi with programmes for both basic and social education. Plans for the purpose were approved long ago but for reasons into which I need not enter here they were not carried into effect. The Ministry of Education decided that there should be no further delay and the scheme should be worked out in Delhi to serve both as an example and a challenge to other provinces. Accordingly, the Delhi Provincial Post-War Educational Development Board was formed. I have myself attended almost every meeting of the Board to ensure that programmes are put into effect as early as possible. In order to get over the difficulty of securing a sufficient number of trained teachers, it was decided to take trained refugee teachers from West Punjab and give them a short refresher course at Jamia Millia, Delhi. Two batches of teachers have already received their training and a third batch will soon start its course. Since then we have been able to establish two training institutes—one at Ajmer for men and the other at Delhi for women, and we hope that they will help to meet the demand for trained teachers for new basic schools as they are founded.

The first set of 47 schools was started on July 1, 1948, and the second set of 50 schools from the second half of November 1948. A third group of 50 schools will start from April 1, 1949, and it is hoped that before the end of the financial year 1949-50 the entire area of Delhi Province will be covered by such basic schools.

In order to make the programme of basic and social education one of immediate interest and utility to the villagers, it has been decided that these village schools will not only be places of instruction for the village children, but also centres of community life in the villages. They will provide instruction to children, adolescents and adults and, in addition, serve as places of recreation and sport. It is also proposed to give the villagers practical training in some craft in order to improve their economic status and to organise sports and other forms of recreation for increasing

their social and community sense. We have taken the help of the Ministries of Health, Labour, Information and Broadcasting, and Agriculture and prepared a composite syllabus which will be gradually introduced in these schools. The following 12-point programme will give a brief indication of the aims we have in view in the scheme of social and basic education :

- (1) The village school will be a centre of instruction, welfare work, sports and recreation for the entire village.
- (2) Separate times will be allotted to children, adolescents and grown-ups.
- (3) Certain days in the week will be reserved exclusively for girls and women.
- (4) A number of motor vans fitted with projectors and loud-speakers are being secured to visit the village schools. Film and magic lantern shows will be given and recorded talks played. It is proposed to visit each school at least once a week.
- (5) Schools will be provided with radio sets and arrangements will be made for broadcasting special programmes for school children, adolescents and grown-up people in the light of the scheme of social education sketched above. About 140 sets have already been provided by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and more will be supplied as soon as possible.
- (6) Popular dramas will be organised in the schools and from time to time prizes given for the best plays produced.
- (7) There will be provision for teaching national and community songs.
- (8) Arrangements will be made for giving simple instruction in some craft or industry suited to the locality.
- (9) Lectures will be arranged in co-operation with the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Labour to instruct villagers in the simple laws of social hygiene, methods of agriculture, cottage industries and co-operative activities.
- (10) In co-operation with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, suitable films and slides will be shown from time to time. Arrangements will also be made for visits of public men to speak to the villagers on problems of national importance. The help and assistance of public

bodies interested in constructive work will be invited to give effect to the programme of social education.

- (11) Arrangements will be made for organising group games. Competitions will be held from time to time between different schools and villages.
- (12) Periodic exhibitions, fairs and excursions will be organised.

[ Only a beginning has been made in our scheme of social and basic education in the villages but this in itself has been a revelation to me and to all those who have seen the scheme at work. For long it has been said that villagers have no realisation of the importance of education. Their age-long inertia, sloth and poverty have been held as obstacles to the introduction of a scheme of National Education. It has been feared that because of their ignorance and superstitions, they may even resist any scheme of compulsory education and force may have to be used to bring education to their children. Experience in Delhi has completely dispelled these fears. I had always held the view that the villager in India has been misjudged in this respect. I have great pleasure in announcing that from the very first day of the programme, villagers in Delhi have responded with an enthusiasm that is beyond all expectations.

One of the methods we propose to use for extending social education as quickly as possible is the holding of educational *melas* or fairs from time to time. It is intended to organise sports during these *melas* as well as arrange visits and lectures of prominent public men. In addition, the villagers will be encouraged to produce dramas of their own as well as exhibit products of local industry and craft. Educational films and radio programmes will be among other features at these *melas*. Two such *melas* have been held in Delhi—one in the month of November and the other only a few days ago. Villages—men, women and children—have responded with an enthusiasm that has been most heartening. Villagers have not been only passive spectators but active participants. Each *mela* has called into activity latent energies of not only the village where it was held but of the entire locality. The experience of these two *melas* has confirmed me in my belief that the Indian villager is on the march today and is thirsting for knowledge. He is ready and anxious for progress and the fault will be entirely ours if we fail to provide him with the means of

education on all fronts. I earnestly hope that the provinces will take up the plan and organise at least one *mela* a month in every province.

Since the last meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, the whole question of scientific and technical studies has been surveyed afresh. You will remember the scheme of Overseas Scholarships instituted by the old Government for training our scientific and technological personnel. Experience showed that the Scheme required thorough overhauling and I appointed for the purpose a committee with Dr. B. C. Roy as its chairman. I also felt that a general survey of our scientific and technological resources and requirements should be made and entrusted the Scientific Manpower Committee with that task.)

Both these Committees have recommended that immediate steps must be taken for strengthening the existing technological institutions in the country and starting new institutions for imparting instruction of the highest standard. They have rightly pointed out that it would be in the interest of the country to provide for such instruction within the country itself. This would gradually obviate the necessity of sending large numbers of students abroad. Till such time, however, as arrangements for imparting instruction up to the highest standard are complete, the despatch of students abroad must not cease.

The Government have generally accepted the recommendations of both these Committees and drawn up a modified scheme of Overseas Scholarships which will aim both at strengthening the teaching personnel in our universities and scientific and technological institutions and providing the necessary staff for carrying through the industrial development of the country. I have no doubt that you have already examined the papers circulated to you and will, if necessary, make constructive suggestions to strengthen our hands in carrying through the above programmes.

I have referred to the great financial difficulty with which the country is faced today. This has compelled us to slow down our programme in many aspects of the educational development of the country. This is a contingency which I cannot but regret and the more so when I remember the extremely inadequate provision made for education of all types in India. When we compare the figures for educational expenditure in India with

7 those in other countries, I cannot help feeling that we have, in fact, not yet made a beginning with a programme of National Education in the truest sense of the term. I have already referred to the extremely meagre educational budgets of the pre-independence days. In spite of the progress made since then, I am sorry to say that the provision for education last year amounted to only Rs. 3,85,00,000 out of a total Central Budget of Rs. 395 crore (excluding the Railways), i.e., less than 1 per cent. During the same year, the total of the provincial budgets shows a figure of Rs. 247 crore of which only about Rs. 30.5 crore were spent on education. Thus, in the case of India as a whole, only a little over 5 per cent has till now been spent for educational purposes and though the budget for 1949-50 will show a perceptible improvement, I must confess that the expenditure is not yet up to my expectations.

8 These figures may be compared with the amounts spent on education in countries like the U.K. and the U.S.A. In the U.K. the State spends on education £ 214,896,000 out of the total budgeted expenditure of £ 2,975,679,000. This represents about 7 per cent of the total budget, but, in addition, another 4 per cent of the total expenditure is contributed by local bodies. Thus in 9 the U.K., the proportion of expenditure on education to the total budget is about 11 per cent. In the U.S.A. the total national expenditure on education is the colossal figure of 12,050,000,000 dollars. The total budgeted expenditure of the Federal Government is in the neighbourhood of 40,000,000,000 dollars. Thus, for a population of about 150 millions, the U.K. is spending about £ 300 millions, and for a population of about 140 millions the U.S.A. is spending 12,000 million dollars.

10 It may also be mentioned that according to the Steelman Report, the U.S.A. proposes to spend by 1957 one per cent of the total national income—not the State Revenue—for purposes of research alone in the universities and industries. This will represent a figure of something like 2,000 million dollars (approximately Rs. 750 crore). In addition, the U.S.A. Government propose to provide a sum of about 300 million dollars (Rs. 100 crore) for equalising the opportunity of secondary and university education for children of comparatively poorer parents. Similarly, Great Britain is spending 76.5 million (Rs. 110 crore) for fundamental and applied research.

Not content with this, the British Government have now under consideration a proposal for further expanding the facilities for higher education by which from 1951 onward, over ninety per cent of the places in the universities and institutions of higher learning will be free. In other words, the process of compulsory education, which started in Great Britain in 1870 by providing universal free education at the primary stage and has continued since 1902 by the provision of free secondary education in the Grammar and the County Schools, has now been brought to its final fruition by making even university education for all practical purposes free and universal. No one can for a moment suggest that Great Britain has not her own financial and economic difficulties. This has not, however, prevented the implementation of her educational expansion programmes, and I trust and hope that we in India also will not allow considerations of financial stringency to hold up for a day longer than is absolutely necessary the programme of universal compulsory and free basic education which is essential for building up the free and democratic India of our dreams.

I have so long spoken to you about basic and social education. University education is, however, of equal importance for the future progress of the land. The recent World War has raised in every country of the world new questionings about the aims and objects of higher education. Such enquiry is of even greater importance to us in the context of our newly won freedom. I will not, however, go into this question today, as we have appointed the Universities Commission to examine the problem of higher education in all its aspects. You have pressed for the appointment of such a Commission for the last three years, and rightly so, for there has been no comprehensive survey of higher education in India since the Sadler Commission submitted its report. Even the Sadler Commission confined itself primarily to one university but the Indian Universities Commission, 1948, has been charged with an enquiry into the whole structure of our higher education in the universities and other institutions of study and research. I am glad that we have as chairman of the Commission so eminent an educationist as Prof. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan. He is being assisted by able colleagues from India and abroad. I am particularly happy that distinguished educators of the U.K. and the U.S.A. have offered us their services in

7 this venture. I am hoping that the Commission will submit their report before the end of the year.]

8 Before concluding, I will draw your attention to one other burning problem of the day. You recommended and the Government of India agreed that the medium of instruction in the primary stages must be the mother tongue. All provinces have accepted the principle, but I think you will agree that as yet only the general principle has been laid down. Difficulties have, however, been felt in working out the details and giving a practical shape to the principle. There is no problem where the mother tongue of the pupil is also the State language, but, where this is not the case, doubts have arisen on several points. It has not been clearly laid down at what stage the State language should be introduced as a second language. Nor is it clear when it should replace the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools. These and allied questions should be examined in detail; and fair and practicable solutions found so that nobody may have any ground for grievance. The Government of India could have taken a decision themselves, but I feel that your advice in the matter will be invaluable, as you represent not only the provinces and the states but also the enlightened opinion of the country.

9 I trust that you will give special attention to the problem during this session and define in a clear and unambiguous manner the detailed procedure for giving effect to an agreed principle. By doing so you will not only solve one of our most difficult educational problems but also render a real service to national unity. |



## ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

15/5 (11.5)  
[In welcoming you to the annual meeting of the Advisory Board of Archaeology, I wish to share with you certain thoughts about the development of archaeological studies in this country. Our main concern must naturally be with the programmes of future expansion, but it is only right and proper that before we do so, we should give some thought to the progress of such studies in India and elsewhere up to now.]

It has for many centuries been recognised that outside China, the three most ancient centres of civilisation in the world have been India, Mesopotamia and Egypt. For centuries, scholars [all over the world have been interested in] their history. It has also been recognised for the last 200 years that archaeology offers almost the only key to the history of ancient times. Paper was unknown in these early days, and even after it was invented, records written in paper perished far more easily than the history written in stone and metal.

2. Recognition of this fact led to extensive archaeological surveys and excavations in Egypt and Mesopotamia with the result that we have today a fairly satisfactory account of their ancient history. In the case of Egypt, not only have the secrets of her ancient hieroglyphics been deciphered but her history ranging back to 5,000 B.C., with [the achievements of her 32 royal dynasties, has also been uncovered. In Nineveh and Babylon, excavations have unfolded to us the history of the ancient civilisation built by the Sumerians and the Akkadians of some five thousand years ago. Entire libraries of books written on earthen tablets and even a dictionary of the language] have been found giving us an insight into the life of the times. It is therefore surprising that, so far as India is concerned, no attempt was made to utilise the resources of archaeology to discover her ancient history. It would be literally true to say that the history of India is still [concealed in the depths of the soil waiting for the archaeologist who will bring new data to light to reconstruct the history of ancient India.]

3  
*At the 6th Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology, New Delhi, February 7, 1949*

One reason of this comparative neglect of archaeology in India may be that Egypt and Mesopotamia are on the fringe of the European civilisation. For many centuries, the Mediterranean basin has been the home of European culture and modern European civilisation has obvious affiliation with these areas. Nor can it be forgotten that the Old Testament is full of references to both Egypt and Mesopotamia so that Europe felt a natural interest in their past history. Another reason for European interest in these areas may be that the Arabs had developed the historical science to a high level of excellence. We find that even before the rise of modern Europe, elaborate studies had been undertaken by the Arab historians in the civilisation of Egypt and Mesopotamia. It was therefore natural that European scholars should take to the study of these civilisations and carry out the extensive excavations which have lit up the history of ancient times.

In spite of the facts mentioned above, it still seems somewhat strange that archaeology should have developed so late in India. A European power was paramount in the country for almost two centuries. It saw specimens of architecture and monuments which proclaimed a proud and ancient civilisation. It was also aware that the civilisation here dated back to a dim past of which only fragmentary knowledge was available to the world. Its officers must have come across ruined cities and monuments which promised to be an excavator's paradise. It is on record that as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, the well-known historians, Elphinstone and Barnes, when they were marching towards Afghanistan, were struck by the mounds they found in the district of Rawalpindi. They also came across Greek coins and speculated whether the mounds they saw contained the ruins of the ancient city of Taxila. In spite of all these incentives to an archaeological survey, hardly anything was done in any part of India till the middle of the nineteenth century.

The Asiatic Society of Bengal was, as in so many other fields, the pioneer of archaeological studies in the country. It decided in 1796 to found a museum for housing collections made by the officers of the East India Company. An impetus to the study of Indian archaeology was given by the discovery in the second quarter of the nineteenth century of the key to Brahmi and Kharoshthi scripts by James Prinsep. In 1848, General Alexander

Cunningham impressed upon the Government of India the necessity of preserving the ancient monuments by the appointment of a suitable officer. His suggestion was accepted and in 1860 Lord Canning established the Archaeological Department with Cunningham as the first Archaeological Surveyor of India. To Prinsep and Cunningham, India owes an incalculable debt for the preservation of her monuments.

I do not wish to go into the details of the chequered history of the department since then. In 1866, the department was sought to be abolished, but it was revived in 1870 under the pressure of public opinion. The work of the survey was extended to South India only in 1874. There was a further impetus to the development of the department under Lord Lytton and the Indian Treasure Trove Act VI of 1878 was passed. After 1889 there was again a disruption in the department and for several years the work was in a state of complete abeyance. The department was reconstituted after 1895, but it was only with the arrival of Lord Curzon that it received a fresh lease of life. Lord Curzon regarded the promotion of archaeological study, the encouragement of research and the preservation of the relics of the past as part of the "Imperial Obligation to India" and re-established the department with Sir John Marshall as Director General of Archaeology in 1902. It was at the instance of Lord Curzon that the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act VII of 1904 was passed by the Indian Legislature. In 1921, Archaeology, including the Epigraphic Branch, was taken over as a central subject and since then it has continued as such even though the activities of the department were seriously curtailed during the retrenchment campaign of 1931.

During recent years, the department has undertaken important works of excavation, of which the most notable are the Khokrakot Excavation, District Rohtak, East Punjab, in 1937; the Sardhari Excavation in N.W.F.P., in 1938; and the Ahichchhatra Excavation in Bareilly, U.P., during 1941-43. Some work was also done in 1940 in Rajghat, Banaras. In 1944, the Excavation Branch was reconstituted by the Government of India and excavations were undertaken in 1944 at Taxila, in 1945 at Arikamedu near Pondicherry, in 1946 at Brahmagiri and Chandravalli in Mysore State, in 1947 at Harappa and in 1948 at Sisupalgarh. The exploration of megalithic sites in the Madras presidency was also

started in 1946. The survey of the Chitaldurg district has now been completed and some work also done in Cochin. There are several new sites which the department proposes to take up as soon as the work at Sisupalgarh has been completed, and its report is published. These include sites at Amaravati in Guntur and Rajgir in Bihar.

Up to now, not much work of excavation has been done in the Indian States. Such work, especially in Bikaner and Jaisalmer, has, however, attained a new importance since the partition of India. Most of the sites explored with a view to having a clear idea of the Indus Valley civilisation have fallen within the boundaries of Pakistan. Bikaner and Jaisalmer were, however, important centres of that civilisation in the past. It is therefore hoped that a thorough exploration of the sites in these areas may throw new light on the history of civilisation connected with the Indus Valley.

The department has no provincial centres but in order to carry out archaeological work in the provinces, it has been divided into the following seven circles :

- (1) Northern Circle, Agra.
- (2) Central Circle, Patna.
- (3) Eastern Circle, Calcutta.
- (4) South-Eastern Circle, Visakhapatnam.
- (5) Southern Circle, Madras.
- (6) Western Circle, Poona.
- (7) Delhi Circle, New Delhi.

The department has helped societies and bodies, whether governmental or private, in carrying out excavations. It is now helping Allahabad University in the excavations at the well-known site of ancient Kausambi. It has also offered assistance and advice to various local societies and research institutions.

The work of the department is divided into four branches, namely, Epigraphical Branch, Chemical Branch, the Excavation Branch and the Museums Branch. Another important activity of the department is the publication of the results of excavation and other research work. The publications of the Archaeological Survey of India have at times assumed different forms and represented various degrees of scholarship and merit, but they have on the whole constituted a noble mine of information for any future historian of India.

It is now proposed to revive the publication of the *Archaeological Memoirs* which was suspended during the war. Material for two volumes is already in hand. In addition, the department proposes to issue a series of short guides to archaeological monuments and inscriptions. It is also proposed to publish picture post-cards, albums of monuments and museums in addition to the regular journals like *Ancient India*, *Epigraphia Indica*, *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica* and the various annual reports.

The publication policy of the department requires revision and expansion. Until recently, almost all our publications were in English. The time has now come when publications in important Indian languages must be undertaken in order to make the results of research available to an average citizen. I propose to make a beginning in this respect as soon as possible.

I have referred to the desirability of the issue of albums and picture post-cards in order to popularise the work of the department with the general public. This must be done on a far wider scale than has been the case till now. Two types of albums should be produced. There should be albums for presentation—at a somewhat higher price—which could be used not only by the lovers of art in India and outside, but also by schools, colleges and other educational institutions for prizes to deserving students. A second type of cheaper album should also be placed in the market to bring it within the reach of the general public. At the same time, the department should discuss with the Ministry of Communications advisability of issuing picture post-cards by post-offices throughout the country. A far wider public would thereby be reached than by any other method.

I feel that we must also explore the possibility of utilising the film in order to present our archaeological and architectural monuments to the people of our country and the world outside. Well-produced films would not only bring out the beauty of such buildings but also make them alive and interesting to a vast number of our people. Other countries have used films as a media for the education of the people in the ancient history of the land. Here, in India also, a provision could be made, by which every cinema would be required to show for at least 10 minutes films depicting some aspect of Indian history and culture.

I have pointed out to you that our history is still concealed beneath the surface of the earth. A fresh start of exploration and

excavation on a much larger scale is necessary to unearth that history. This requires strengthening of the staff in all branches and a complete re-organisation of the department. I am also convinced of the necessity to provide permanent training facilities for students outside the department. Such training is essential for successful archaeological work and you will be glad to hear that we have recently sent two officers for advanced training in the U.K. I have not lost sight of the urgency of a properly equipped National Museum for India. A beginning has already been made, and I am doing all that is possible to bring the scheme to a successful conclusion as early as possible.

You will, however, realise that in view of the present financial difficulties, it may not be possible to do all that is desirable or necessary. Nevertheless, archaeology is so important for a proper appreciation of our history that something must be done in spite of the present difficulties. I can assure you that the Government of India will do whatever is possible within the limitations of finance. You must also advise the Government as to how best to utilise our limited resources during the period of stringency and prepare a long-term programme of work which can be undertaken as soon as the economic position improves.

## ALIGARH AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

In accepting the invitation extended so cordially by your Vice-Chancellor to come and address the annual convocation of Aligarh University, it was but natural that my thoughts should turn to the occasion when I first came in contact with it. That was 36 years ago and took place in circumstances which represented me to many as an opponent of this institution.

The facts of the case were, however, entirely different. It was a time when the Indian Muslims not only stood aloof from all political movements of the day but were inclined to oppose the country's struggle for emancipation. The single largest factor responsible for such political inertia of the Indian Muslims was the lead which the late Sir Syed Ahmed, founder of this institution, had given in the last quarter of the 19th century. The Aligarh Party which continued his policy tried to keep the Muslims out of the Indian National Congress and was generally successful except in the case of a few distinguished individuals.

It was in this background that I brought out the *Al Hilal* in 1912. From the beginning of my political life, I was convinced that the Indian Muslims must participate in the movement for emancipation and work towards that end through the National Congress. It was inevitable that I should criticise the political lead which the late Sir Syed Ahmed had given and which represented the policy of the Aligarh Party. I therefore came into a clash with this party on the political issue. This was, however, regarded by its members as opposition not only to the founder's political policy but to the institution itself. In fact, some of them went so far as to look upon me not only as an opponent but an enemy of Sir Syed Ahmed and Aligarh.

Nothing was, however, farther from the truth. It is true that I regarded the political lead of Sir Syed Ahmed as a grave blunder but at the same time I had the highest admiration for the educational and other reforms which he carried out. I regarded, and

still regard him as one of the greatest Indians of the 19th century. His achievements in the field of education and social reform could not, however, blind me to the wrong lead he gave to the Indian Muslims in the field of politics. Thirty-six years have passed since then but as I survey the course of events during this period, I find no reason to revise my judgment on this issue. I then held and still hold that Sir Syed was a great reformer in the educational and social fields, but the wrong lead he gave in politics has been responsible for many of the evils from which we have suffered. It is, however, not my purpose to discuss the political role today but to pay my tribute to the memory of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the educational reformer, who laid the foundation of modern education among the Indian Muslims.

Today, Western education has become part of our national life and we naturally think of it when we use the term 'education.' It is therefore difficult to realise the opposition and struggle which, a hundred years ago, faced the reformers who wanted to introduce this new education in India. They had not only to blaze a new trail but had to contend with obstacles and difficulties at every step. They had to face all those forces which any movement for reform has to face. The prejudices and superstitions of ages clouded the minds of the people. Accepted beliefs and age-old sentiments were both against such a change. The cry of religion supplied the opponents of progress with one of their most potent weapons. The path of religion is not in fact opposed to that of reason and knowledge but unfortunately this has often been represented to be so. The usual cry was that Western education was opposed to the teachings of religion and those who held religion dear must therefore adhere to the old education.

Human thought has had to face this conflict at different times in different countries. Europe went through this struggle in the 17th and 18th centuries while the Eastern countries faced this conflict in the 19th century. The Hindus of India faced this struggle earlier and ended it quickly. Among the Muslims, it took a longer time but in the end the inevitable happened. The forces of change triumphed and the new order had to replace the old. So far as the Muslims of India are concerned, one can assert without any fear of contradiction that the man who played the most important role in this struggle is the presiding spirit of



this University. The battle was fought here in Aligarh and Aligarh is a visible embodiment of the victory of the forces of progress.

Some of our writers have compared Sir Syed Ahmed Khan with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. To a large extent the comparison is valid. What Raja Ram Mohan Roy did for Bengal was done by Sir Syed Ahmed, 40 years later, for Northern India and especially for the Muslims of the country. The only difference between the two is that the main reforms of Raja Ram Mohan Roy were in the field of religion while those of Sir Syed were in the field of education. They have, however, left the stamp of their personality in all spheres of intellectual activity. Religion, education, social life, language, literature and journalism bear witness to their spirit of reform and creative energy.

We have also to remember that even though Sir Syed Ahmed was opposed to the political movement of the Congress, there was not the least tinge of communal politics in his attitude. His activities even in the political field comprised both Hindus and Muslims. He was throughout his life a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. He opposed whatever was in any way likely to cause dissension or difference between them. In his speeches, he again and again used the beautiful metaphor that Hindus and Muslims were the two eyes in Mother India's face.

We can form some idea of his outlook on Indian nationalism from the significance he gave to the term 'Hindu.' In addressing an association of Hindus in Lahore he said, "I am sorry that you have restricted in this manner the application of the term 'Hindu'. You have applied it to a particular religious group. But to my mind this application is wrong. I count as Hindu all those who are the inhabitants of this country whatever be their religion or race. This is the reason why I take pride in the fact that I am a Hindu." If the Hindus and Muslims of India had understood the spirit of this teaching and followed it, the whole course of recent events would have taken a different turn.

Sir Syed Ahmed laid the foundations of this educational institution with a specific object. He had been impressed by the spirit of English education and realised that its excellence lay not merely in imparting instruction but in training of a special kind. The peculiarity of this training was that it developed the character of young men and women and gave them a distinct stamp. He

also felt that along with European education, the Muslims must have religious instruction and training. He knew that without such provision the new education would not be popular among the Muslims. He realised that his objects could not be achieved without a special institution for the purpose. He therefore dedicated the remaining years of his life to the creation of the Aligarh College. We must remember that this was the first institution in India which sought to create the atmosphere of a British Public School.

The scheme he had in mind initially was the establishment of a residential university on the lines of Cambridge. He had, however, to content himself with the establishment of only a college. Considering the prevalent conditions, this was no mean achievement. The movement for the University was started after his death as a memorial to him and was accomplished after hard labour of some 20 years.

Sir Syed had established in Aligarh not only a college but an intellectual and cultural centre in tune with the progressive spirit of the times. The centre of this circle was Sir Syed himself and he attracted round him some of the best intellects of the day. Perhaps no journal in India has ever had such influence upon the mind of the generation as his *Tehzib-Ul-Akhlaq*. Sir Syed founded this journal after return from his tour in England. He and his colleagues were its main contributors. In fact, this journal laid the foundation of modern Urdu literature and so developed the language that today it is capable of expressing the highest and most abstruse thoughts. Perhaps, there was not a single literary figure among the Muslims of the day who was not influenced by his circle. The best Muslim authors of the modern age were nourished here. Here developed the new schools of research, interpretation and reconstruction of Muslim thought. Though modern Urdu poetry was born in Lahore, it was here that it found the atmosphere most conducive to its growth. Poems of a new style were composed and read at the sessions of the Mohammedan Education Conference. This was also the first forum of Urdu oratory. All the important speakers of the day were created or nurtured on this platform.

The 19th century was for India, as for other regions in the East, a transitional age. The old forms of life and thought were being demolished and new ones set up in their place. The old

earth of India was being moulded into a new form. So far as the Indian Muslims are concerned, one can say that it was in Aligarh that these movements of reform were consummated. It was one of the regions which took the lead in the creation of a new India. The 19th century marked a period of renaissance for the Indian spirit and Aligarh was one of the centres of such renaissance.

It is true that with the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Aligarh lost many of its distinctive features. Though the College was raised to the status of a University, it could not revive the traditions of its early glory. Nevertheless, you must remember that this glorious heritage is yours, and it is for you to revive the past splendour of Aligarh. The inscriptions which have been carved on the walls of your Strachy Hall may fade with the passage of time, but the inscriptions which Aligarh has written on the modern period of Indian history can never fade. Future historians will discover in Aligarh one of the main sources which have contributed to the evolution of modern India.

An educational institution which has such a glorious past must necessarily hold the promise of an equally glorious future. I am not aware what the state of your minds is today, nor in what colours the future appears to you. Does it bring to you the message of closing doors or of opening gates that introduce you to new vistas of experience? I do not know what visions are before you, but I will tell you what visions I see. You perhaps feel that doors that were open have been closed. I see that doors that were locked have now opened. In the words of the Persian Poet,

*Tafawut ast main-i-shanidan-i-man-o-to*

*Tu bastan-i-dar, o, man fatahe-bab me shanwam.*

What you and I hear are different. You hear the sound of closing doors but I of doors that open.

I want that I should speak to you frankly and without mental reservations and I am sure that this is what you would expect of me. If I thought that you were still living in that atmosphere of communal politics which was prevalent before the 15th of August, 1947, I would without hesitation say that your future does not hold that promise which, as an Indian Muslim, I would like you to have. I am glad that there has been a profound change since then and the signs of a new era are becoming clearer every day. You have realised in good time what the intellectual atmosphere of this institution must be in the changed circumstances of today.

You have responded to the call of the new times and created conditions which are in conformity with the changed outlook. I have no hesitation in saying that by conforming to the spirit of the times, you have rendered a great service not only to this Institution but to all Muslims of the Indian Union. For this, I extend to you my sincere congratulations.

I would like to describe to you briefly the Central Government's plan and programme of national education and the place which an institution like Aligarh University will have in that new scheme. I think you will agree that the educational set-up for a secular and democratic State must be secular. It should provide for all citizens of the State the same type of education without any distinction. It should have its own intellectual flavour and its own national character. It should have as its aim the ideal of human progress and prosperity. The Indian Union has set before itself such a scheme of common education for all without distinction or discrimination in favour of any community or group.

At the same time, it recognises that there is scope for educational institutions which emphasise certain special types of learning. Their doors should, however, be open to all who are interested in such studies. This is the sphere of national education in which your institution can find its proper place in conformity with the spirit of the times. In this way, you will, in spite of your special characteristics, be a part of the general scheme of education and serve a special function in it. For this you must, however, display the widest catholicity of spirit. It is said that Plato had the following text inscribed on his Academy: "Those who do not know Geometry, have no place here." Your Institution must not have even such a restricting clause. Your motto should be that you will welcome both those who "know Geometry" and those who "do not."

I am aware that the governing principle in your Institution has been from the very beginning wide and liberal. When your College was founded, the very first batch of students included Hindus as well as Muslims. Your staff has also been recruited from all communities. The names of certain Hindu professors have become part of your Institution's history. I am sure that these traditions will be broadened and further enriched in the course of time.

Study and research in Islamic learning and Islamic history

have been part of your tradition. I must say that, after the death of Sir Syed, it no longer displayed the vigour it had during his days. Even after the University was established, old hopes were not fulfilled. Your duty today is to revive those old traditions and to create in your University an atmosphere of research and enquiry into all the spheres of knowledge.

I have already reminded you that Aligarh was the place where modern Urdu literature developed. This is an achievement of which your University can be rightly proud. It is your duty to cherish this heritage and further enrich it. I must, however, remind you that your literary efforts must have a wider field than in the past. You should take an equal interest in Hindi literature. Muslims have been noted for their interest in different languages and literatures. Hindi literature has the same claim on the Muslims as on the Hindus of India. Both the communities have contributed equally to the development of Urdu and Hindi literatures. The new literature in Brij Bhasha which commenced in the Mughul period was the result of the patronage of rulers like Akbar and Jehangir and the contributions of writers of genius like Mohammad Jayesi, Khan Khanan and Abdul Jalil Bilgrami. We find that, up to the end of the 18th century, the number of Muslim poets who wrote in Brij Bhasha is considerable. The time has come when you must revive that old tradition. I desire that this Institution should produce a large number of writers who are equally at home with Hindi and Urdu literatures.

The question of script is one of the controversial problems of today. You know what the opinion of Gandhiji was in this respect. His sincere desire was that every Indian should know both the Urdu and the Devanagri scripts. That is why he founded the Hindusthani Prachar Sabha and made it an essential condition that its workers should know both the scripts. This has also been my opinion for years. I feel that this is the only solution which is possible in the present circumstances. I hope that the lovers of Urdu literature will not wait to find out the reactions of the advocates of Hindi literature, but will themselves do what they regard as conducive to the best interests of the country. In every other sphere of life, one may wait to see what others do, but in the field of learning we can wait for others only at the risk of detracting from our credit. If others are content to know only one script, we need not be sorry that we have learnt

two. My sincere desire is that every Muslim in India should learn both the scripts, and thus set an example before the country. This was the message of Mahatma Gandhi, and I am confident that Muslims will act up to it with enthusiasm.

I am glad to find that there is already a recognition of the importance of such work on all sides, and that books have been written in Urdu which make it easy to learn Devanagiri script and become familiar with Hindi literature. Some organisations have been set up in different parts of the country for this purpose. They have already started their activities. I am sure that you have realised the importance of this work and your Institution will be recognised as one of its most active centres.

I will now conclude with a few words of advice to the young graduates who have taken their degrees today and are entering into the responsibilities of life. You yourselves have, no doubt, felt the tremendous changes which have taken place since the days you entered the portals of this University. When you first joined this Institution, you were members of a subject nation. Today you are leaving this University as free citizens of an independent India. I am not sure whether all of you appreciate fully the extent of this tremendous change. As members of a subject nation, you suffered many disabilities. As citizens of a free State, you enter into new responsibilities. The widening of opportunities which freedom has brought has also necessarily brought with it the need for greater loyalty and devotion to your State. Today there are no limits to what you can achieve but this very fact imposes upon you the duties which freedom brings.

You are the citizens of free India—a State which is determined to develop its political and social life on secular and democratic lines. The essence of a secular and democratic State is freedom of opportunity for the individual without regard to race, religion, caste or community. As members of such a State, you have therefore the right—provided you have the necessary qualities of character and attainment—to expect all doors to open to you, whether in the fields of politics, trade, industry, service or the professions. There is no gainsaying the fact that in the past many of the alumni of this Institution looked to nothing but employment under the Government. Freedom must bring in a widening of the mind and an enlargement of your ambitions. You must therefore look forward in a free India to the utilisation

of your talents in the manner best suited to the needs of the Nation.

I have no doubt in my mind that if you can imbibe this spirit of progressive nationalism which is the motto of our secular democratic State, there will be no position in any field of life that will be beyond your reach. I would therefore urge upon you to develop and strengthen your character and acquire knowledge that will fit you to play your rightful part for the future progress and prosperity of the country.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I am very glad of this opportunity of visiting the Scindia School at Gwalior founded fifty years ago by the late Maharaja of Gwalior, Sir Madhava Rao Scindia. The manner in which the School has developed since then and established for itself an all-India position is eloquent testimony to the interest taken by him and his successors. I am confident Your Highness will continue to take the same interest in its future growth and development.

A good school is a national asset of the highest value at any place or at any time. Schools are the laboratories which produce the future citizens of a State. The quality of the State therefore depends upon the quality of such laboratories. In the context of modern India the importance of good schools is even greater. On the one hand, we have vast illiteracy and on the other, almost unbounded opportunities. The achievement of independence has opened to the people new vistas and we can achieve all that we have hoped for, provided the human material in the country can meet the challenge demanded of them. In spite of the vastness of our resources and opportunities, it is an unfortunate fact that the number of good schools in this country is all too rare. The obligation of a school like the Scindia is therefore all the greater.

I have been very glad to learn of the manner in which the Scindia School has grown through a synthesis of Indian and British traditions. You have in this school rightly proved that there is in this country an ancient tradition of residential schools which shared many features in common with the modern Public Schools. You have, as is only right and proper, taken from the English Public School system whatever was good in it but you have grafted it on what is basically an Indian Institution. A school like yours, in which equal emphasis is placed on academic work, physical and health organisation, creative activity and training in responsibility and integrated behaviour, can serve a most useful purpose in the present transitional phase of Indian

*Speech at the Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Scindia School, Gwalior, February 26, 1949*





*Presiding over the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of  
the Scindia School at Gwalior, February 1949*



*Inaugurating the Conference for Cultural Co-operation Between  
India and Other Asian Countries, New Delhi, August 1949*



*At the All India Conference on Arts, Calcutta, September 1949*

life. I am particularly glad to see that, apart from the emphasis on the usual Public School activities found in British schools, you have made provision for the development of the spiritual aspect of the boys in your charge.

It was perhaps inevitable that when the School started, it was meant to be exclusive and had a distinct military bias for a considerable time. I am glad that you have given up that exclusiveness and turned the School into an all-India Public School drawing boys from all parts of India and from all major social and religious groups. This is a move in the right direction and is in keeping with the spirit of the times. If there is any one feature which distinguishes modern India, it is the growth of the spirit of democracy which seeks to give equality of opportunity to all its citizens. All past barriers based on birth, privilege, caste or wealth are breaking down. As a secular democratic State, we are pledged to the widening of opportunities and equality of chances for all. I am very glad to learn that your Highness has taken a leading part in the breaking down of such barriers. I am confident that the same wise statesmanship will guide you in widening still further the services which the Scindia School can offer to the rising generations of free India.

In the past, exclusive schools like yours served two main purposes. They were established either to cater for the needs of princely families or they were founded by Europeans to offer education according to European models. Whatever opinion we may have about their exclusive character, it cannot be denied that they rendered a great service in introducing education of the British Public School type to India. This system of residential education with its emphasis on the growth of character and leadership has much to offer to India, and both types of schools to which I have referred deserve well of the country, having brought the benefits of this system to young Indians.

This is the reason why after the attainment of independence, the Ministry of Education in considering the future of such schools decided that with certain changes they could render great service to free India. After the 15th of August 1947, there was no longer any room for schools of an exclusive type, but once their exclusive character was removed, the former Chiefs' Schools and European Schools could be fitted into our scheme of National Education. Not only so, their special characteristics in developing discipline

and corporate life make such schools more necessary for training the future leaders of independent India. The Ministry of Education have therefore decided to put under their direct supervision both schools like the Chiefs' College at Ajmer or Raipur and the European Schools like those at Lovedale and Sanawar associated with the name of Sir Henry Lawrence. Their exclusive character has been removed and their doors thrown open to all without regard to birth, status or province. They have thus become for the first time Public Schools in the real sense of the term. I am glad to find that here at Gwalior you have developed along the same lines and converted your school into an all-India school which is open to all without distinction.

9 I am glad to find so many distinguished representatives of the princely order of India present here. May I take this opportunity of saying how greatly I have appreciated the manner in which you have helped in breaking down the barrier between what were the provinces and the states during the British days? By your action in breaking these barriers and bringing your states within the orbit of the Indian Union, you have acted wisely and well. You have also acted wisely and well in transferring power to the hands of representative bodies and thus placing the administration on a level with that of the rest of India. These are great services and I am sure that the country appreciates the spirit in which you have rendered them.

10 There remains, however, one question that I would ask of you. Till yesterday you were rulers; today you have given up the reins of power. Do you feel that by giving up power in this manner, you have still a function to perform on the stage of modern India? Some of you may feel that now that administration is in the hands of popular bodies, you have nothing further to do. Such a feeling is, to my mind, unjustified, for there is one function you can perform that no one can take from you. You will agree with me that just as a ruler has power over his people, he has also the opportunity of serving them. His power may disappear but no one can take away his capacity for service. You have acted wisely in responding to the challenge of the changed times and divesting yourselves of your administrative work. You will act even more wisely if you train yourselves to serve the country in keeping with the spirit of the new age, and I can assure you that should you decide to do so, you will have in future India a position

even more exalted than the one you had occupied in the past. For, in the past, your position was based on power and fear; in the future, your position will be built on service and love.

We are living today in an age of democracy. There are men who think that there is no scope for aristocracy in such a context. This is, however, not my opinion. When aristocracy is opposed to democracy, it may be cast aside by the present age, but when aristocracy serves as an adjunct to democracy and seeks to fulfil its purposes, aristocracy can render a service to democracy which nothing else can. Aristocracy develops a width of vision and a far-reaching imagination which is not usually found outside its orbit. Such vision and imagination cannot be acquired by training in a school. Book learning is no substitute for the vision which develops from generation to generation. Your family traditions and the art of leadership which you have developed through the training of generations can therefore help in supplying qualities which we need to build the India of our dreams. My appeal to you is therefore to rise to the occasion and prepare yourselves in a spirit of service in order to take your right place in the growth and development of free India.

158  
(112)  
INDIA AND UNESCO

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this inaugural meeting of the National Commission of Unesco. This is in some ways a memorable occasion, for the constitution of the National Commission gives concrete shape to our efforts for international co-operation in the fields of education, science and culture. It would therefore perhaps be appropriate if I should describe in some detail the aims and objectives of Unesco and the manner in which it has attempted to carry out its purposes.

After the experience of two world wars within the course of barely twenty-five years, thinking men and women all over the world realise, as never before, that there must be a change in the outlook of man to avert the calamity of a future disaster. It was out of this universal desire to find an instrument for the settlement of disputes without resort to war that there arose the United Nations with renewed hope for afflicted humanity.

All conflicts have their ultimate origin in the mind of man and it was felt that unless the causes of fear, suspicion, distress and jealousy could be eradicated from human minds no efforts by politicians and statesmen could remove the possibility of future wars. At the time of the preliminary discussions for setting up a United Nations Organisation, it was therefore decided that there should also be an organisation for promoting closer collaboration among different peoples of the world in the fields of education, science and culture. Accordingly, Unesco was set up to achieve these ends.

At the time of the constitution of Unesco, it was realised that co-operation and understanding among nations could be built only if there was co-operation and understanding among the different elements within the nation itself. If within a nation itself there were divergent elements whose differing points of view had not been fully co-ordinated, such a nation could hardly serve as a harmonious unit in the international setting. Experience showed that there was not only colossal ignorance about

*Speech at the Inauguration of the National Commission of Unesco, New Delhi, April 9, 1949*

different nations but in many cases members of the same nation were ignorant of one another's attitudes, beliefs, customs and faith. This was an experience which was almost universal except in the case of a very few small and homogeneous nations. Further, it was felt that closer co-operation between different elements in our national life would lead to a promotion of activities in all the fields of education, science and culture. The constitution of Unesco therefore provided that every nation should set up as soon as possible a National Commission or co-operating body for furthering the aims and objects of Unesco within the national unit. It was also felt that such activities could be carried out better by a non-official agency than by the Government or anybody set up directly under the Government auspices. 4

The constitution of Unesco provides that only States can be members. This guarantees that there will be no possibility of adding to international complications through its activities. There is, however, another aspect of the question which cannot be ignored. The nature of education, science and culture is such that their cause can be served better by private and voluntary agencies. This is the reason why Unesco constitution insists that there should be voluntary bodies of National Commissions to perform its functions in the national field. 5

Unfortunately, the experience of the last three years has not fully justified the hopes which were raised by the establishment of the United Nations Organisation. In spite of the initial agreement with which it started, it has today become the arena for struggles between rival blocks. It is true that the struggle is yet only a cold war. This is, however, little consolation to those who seek peace on an enduring basis. It is tragic that even today nations have not given up the old attitudes which so often led to war.

The one gleam of hope offered in this dark picture today is the manner in which Unesco, an allied organisation of the United Nations, has been attempting to establish better relations among human beings in the fields of education, science and culture. It is obvious that in the realm of material clash of interests, compromise is difficult while in the fields of the creative spirit, co-operation and compromise are not only possible, but are the natural law. The division of material wealth leads to a diminution in 6



its quantity while the distribution of spiritual wealth leads to mutual enrichment. Unesco has also rightly recognised that all conflicts, even in the material field, have their ultimate origin in the mind of man. It was therefore felt that unless the causes of fear, suspicion, distress and jealousy could be eradicated from the human mind, no efforts by the politicians and statesmen alone could remove the possibility of future conflicts. This is the justification of Unesco as well as the reason why it has become a rallying ground for the faith and hope of all who want to avert the disaster of a third world war.

6 In its brief life of three years, Unesco has already made considerable progress towards the achievement of its objects. The very fact of associating together a large number of people of different nations with marked differences in language, background, social habits and outlook is a considerable achievement. The obligation under the constitution of holding the General Conference in a different country each year has added to the burdens of the Secretariat but in spite of such initial difficulties, the progress achieved holds promise of still greater achievements in the future. In three years, the membership has increased to 44 while national commissions are either in operation or about to be inaugurated in about 35 countries. A large number of international conferences and seminars have been held under its auspices. Of the various activities in these fields, one which deserves special mention is the establishment of the Institute of Hylean Amazon. Another is the establishment of pilot projects in fundamental education in Haiti. The development of the educational section as a clearing house for ideas and experience in different parts of the world is also proving extremely helpful. The constitution of a new Division of Arts and Letters with Dr. Lin Yutang as head has also contributed to a greater exchange in cultural matters between the Asian and European countries. Recently, it was decided to set up a special centre for the Middle and Near East. It has also been decided to promote the establishment of an Institute for Arid Zones and another for the study of conditions in high altitudes.

9 Unesco has also tried to contribute to a clearer analysis and understanding of the philosophical concepts as the basis of modern civilisation. A volume on human rights is already in the press and one on the concept of democracy is under preparation. A

specialised journal, *Museum*, and an official organ called *The Unesco Courier* are among its regular publications.

Unesco has helped in the organisation of work camps for both reconstruction and education in war devastated areas. It has arranged for the exchange of students and voluntary works. During 1948, over 50 million dollars were distributed in educational relief by voluntary organisations largely through its efforts. In its last conference at Beirut it decided to extend the field of reconstruction from the war devastated areas to the undeveloped or underdeveloped areas of the world in order to help in the achievement of more uniform standards throughout the world. It is expected that a concrete programme for the achievement of this end will be one of the main items before the next General Conference.

Unesco has also been helping the exchange of books by Book Coupons for countries which have a shortage of dollars. It has also helped in making scientific equipment available to countries short of such material. A Field Science Co-operation Office has recently been established in Delhi for South Asia. The East Asia Science Co-operation Office has undertaken the responsibility of allocating and distributing in that region two million dollars worth of education and engineering equipment collected by Unrra.

Another project undertaken by Unesco is the translation of great books in order to make the cultural heritage of different countries available to one another. Considerable progress has been made in exploring the possibilities of the production of cheap books. Another valuable contribution to international understanding is the project of studying the causes of tensions between different people and communities with a view to finding out methods of eradicating them. Its most ambitious venture in this field is the project to produce a scientific and cultural history of mankind.

Members will be glad to learn that ever since the foundation of Unesco, India has been playing an important part in its deliberations. She is one of the founder members and helped in the shaping of its aims and purposes. In spite of the political and other disabilities under which she then laboured, and the extremely restricted size of her delegations, she played a leading role in both the first and the second conferences. She has been on

the Executive Board from the very beginning and her representatives have made valuable contributions in almost every sphere of Unesco's activities.

During the last year, several achievements and projects of special interest to India have been undertaken. The election of Prof. Radhakrishnan as the Chairman of the Executive Board has brought an Asian to the Head of the Organisation for the first time. The Indian Delegation at the third Conference played a very important role and made valuable contributions in almost every decision taken there. Some of the Indian experts who have been associated with the special activities of Unesco during the last year may be specially mentioned. Dr. Zakir Hussain attended a meeting on Fundamental Education of Experts in Paris in April 1948, and Mr. N. K. Sidhanta attended a meeting of experts for the translation of great books. Mr. Humayun Kabir of this Ministry was invited to contribute a chapter to Unesco's volume on Human Rights as a result of the International Symposium. Mr. Lakshmanan, Director General of All India Radio was invited to attend the Technical Needs Commission Expert Committee and Mr. Kirpal of this Ministry to survey the educational and cultural needs of the refugees in the Middle East. Dr. S. K. Banerjee attended the International High Altitude Research Conference and Mr. M. S. Sundaram of this Ministry represented India in the Preparatory Conference of the universities of the World.

During the last General Conference of Unesco, there was a proposal to hold a Far Eastern Seminar on Education. The object originally considered was 'Education of War-handicapped Children,' but at the instance of India, the subject finally chosen was 'Adult Education' which is the most pressing problem facing all the Asian countries. Unesco has accepted India's invitation to hold the seminar in India. This will be its first seminar to be held in Asia and is to take place during November.

For reasons which are known to every one, it has not been possible to set up the Indian National Commission of Unesco earlier. As members are aware, the problems created by partition demanded all the energy and attention of the Government till about the middle of 1948. As soon as things started settling down, the Government appointed a Committee to consider the setting up of a Commission and after its report had been approved

by the Central Advisory Board of Education in January this year, the Government did not allow any lapse of time in setting up this Commission. It is expected that this Commission will serve as a focus of educational, scientific and cultural activities of the Nation and will contribute to the enrichment of national life in all these fields as well as better co-operation and understanding with other countries.

## RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

Immediately after I assumed charge of the Ministry of Education in January 1947, I looked into the development projects which had been accepted in principle but not carried out in practice. Of these, one of the most outstanding was the scheme for a Central College of Training for Teachers. The Central Advisory Board of Education had, in 1944, recommended the establishment of two training colleges—one for men and the other for women, each providing for an intake of 200 students for the service of the Centrally Administered Areas and the smaller provinces and states. On grounds of economy the Government of India modified that recommendation and decided to establish one college for both men and women, with a capacity of 300. Provision was accordingly made in the budget of 1946-47 for the establishment of the college.

When I took office, I was therefore surprised to find that the whole programme had been held up on the ground of shortage of building materials. I was aware of the difficulties in securing steel and cement and other equipment and I could understand the delay in the implementation of the building programme. I could not, however, understand why this led to a postponement of the entire scheme. Even if buildings were lacking, the institute could have been started in temporary structures or hired houses, but here, as in so many other cases, programmes of educational development were held up on the ground of lack of accommodation. This undue stress upon buildings has always seemed to me to be an instance of confusing ends with means. Buildings are only a means of which the end is education, and yet it seemed to me that many of our educational planners were so engrossed with building projects that they could not conceive of carrying on educational work in their absence. I therefore decided forthwith that the institution must be started immediately with whatever accommodation was readily available.

The period was an exceedingly difficult one and all the atten-

*Speech delivered at the laying of the foundation of the Central Institute of Education by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Delhi, April 18, 1949*

tion of the Government was concentrated first on the disturbances in the Punjab and later on the impending division of the country. Even then, a small house was secured in the Delhi University area in July 1947. I realised that this was not adequate for our needs and the work of the institute even on the smallest scale could be carried out only by the additional accommodation provided in tents. In spite of our anxiety to get the institute working, a further period of delay was enforced by the division of the country and the extension of disturbances of Delhi itself, and for several months all normal activities had to be totally suspended. As soon, however, as the situation was brought under control, on the 19th of December, 1947, the Central Institute of Education was formally opened by Lady Mountbatten and it started to work in one hired building and several tents.

It is hardly necessary for me to relate at length the importance of an institute of this kind. With literacy figures so low as only 15 per cent, the paramount importance of expanding the facilities of education is obvious. The acceptance of democracy as the pattern of our State has, if anything, added to the urgency of the problem. It is also self-evident that the first step towards expanding the facilities of education is to provide for an increase in the number of trained teachers. Equally necessary is an institution to assess the results of educational methods followed till now and devise improvements, demanded in the changing circumstances of today.

It will be noticed that the institution, which was started in December 1947, was the Central Institute of Education and not the training colleges which had originally been planned in 1944 and 1945. This meant not merely a change in nomenclature, but a considerable expansion in the purpose and functions of the institution. I felt that changes were necessary in two directions. First, it should not be merely a college for training teachers but also an institution for research in the fields of education. Secondly, its services should not be restricted to the Centrally Administered Areas but should extend to the whole of India.

The Central Institute will therefore both train teachers for higher and secondary schools and also carry on research on the problems of basic and secondary education. The stage at which a child should be introduced to a craft as distinct from activity, the relative emphasis on craft and academic subjects and their

correlation, the production of a new type of school literature to bring out the social functions of all human activity, the degree of abstraction possible in the earlier stages of education, the stage at which there may be some bifurcation between academic subjects and crafts, the grouping of children according to aptitude, taste and ability, the place of art in the school curriculum—these are only a few of the many problems which arise out of a new conception of basic education and require constant and careful study in a research institution.

There are also problems relating to adult education which demand fresh and careful scrutiny. It is a commonplace that the methods which are suitable for children cannot without modification be applied to adults. No doubt, a good deal of work in this connection has been done in other countries of the world but each country has its own peculiar problems arising out of its social and economic background and its political history. We will have to devise the quickest methods of liquidating adult illiteracy. Equally important is the maintenance of a continued service of literature to prevent relapse into illiteracy. Thus alone can we provide adult literates with the knowledge to discharge their functions as citizens of a democratic state.

I could go on referring to many other problems which require immediate attention if we are to make our education truly creative. The system of examinations is itself being studied all over the world. The problem of textbooks which will provide useful and interesting information and at the same time develop a truly human outlook on world affairs is also engaging the attention of many countries. The aim and purpose of secondary education also require a re-examination. It is my hope that the Central Institute of Education will be our laboratory for examining all these important questions under controlled conditions and offering suggestions as to the best methods for their solution.

I have already stated that we did not allow the lack of buildings to delay the starting of the institution and I am glad that, in spite of these difficulties, the institution has made good progress. Nevertheless, I felt that now that the Institute has started to work, we must provide suitable buildings for it as soon as possible. When the plans were made in 1945, the estimated expenditure for buildings was Rs. 18 lakh, but the sharp rise in the cost of construction is bound to lead to an increase in expenditure. I am,

however, glad that, notwithstanding the difficulties, we are today in a position to take in hand the building programme of the Institute and I hope that it will, in the near future, have all the buildings it needs.

A library of over 5,000 books has been built up at a cost of approximately forty thousand rupees. We are hoping that when completed, the Institute Library will be comparable with similar research libraries elsewhere. I am also hoping that we shall, in the course of the next year or so, attach to the Institute a Psychological Section to carry out experiments in aptitude tests, selection methods, vocational guidance and other services.

We are conscious that only a beginning has been made and all that we propose and hope to accomplish is still in the realm of the future. Foundations truly laid are, however, a guarantee of future success, and no one, Mr. Prime Minister, is more aware than yourself of the need of imaginative planning and bold execution in order to achieve our objects. It is for this reason that we requested you to lay the foundation of this Institute, so that this new institution may, from its very inception, be inspired by that broad humanism and width of culture which have distinguished your actions in public and private life. I have, Mr. Prime Minister, great pleasure in requesting you to lay the foundation-stone of this Institute.



## EDUCATION OF YOUTH

We have as one of the items for discussion today a problem which raises fundamental issues of law and justice. Till now, the State has looked upon an offence as a crime for which the offender must expiate. Such offences, whether you call them crimes or sins, were regarded as evil and attracted as their inevitable consequence, punishment. Punishment was therefore regarded as a consequence of crime and justified in itself. The classic exposition of this view is in the principle "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

Later ages, however, raised the question of the utility or justification of punishment. Critics arose who asked how a murdered person benefited by the slaughter of his murderer. In fact, the only result was the loss of life of two individuals instead of one. Punishment was therefore sought to be justified on grounds of its deterrent character, but even this did not satisfy critics who pointed out that, as a matter of fact, punishment did not deter. A new school of thought arose, which approached the problem of punishment from the point of view of reform of the offender. Instead of a retributive theory of punishment, we thus find the emergence of an educative and reformatory theory of punishment.

This dispute between the different theories of punishment has not yet been settled, but on one point there is almost unanimous agreement among both theorists and practical men of affairs. All are agreed that in the case of juveniles there must be a change of outlook with regard to punishment. For one thing, young persons, without maturity of judgment, cannot be held fully responsible for their actions. For another, experience has shown that confinement of such juveniles in jails confirms them into criminals. In fact, children who may have committed some crime through want of knowledge or on the impulse of the moment, become habitual criminals if they are once sent to jail.

Recognition of this fact has led many countries to provide separate establishments for juveniles. In India we have had

---

*Speech delivered at the Provincial Education Ministers' Conference, New Delhi, August 19, 1949*

reformatories and houses of correction in different provinces, but it must be admitted that even these have not fully met the purpose. The provision of such reformatories or juvenile jails has, no doubt, separated the juvenile offenders from the confirmed criminals, but as they themselves have been miniature jails, the educative and reformatory aspect has not found a proper emphasis.

Apart from the inadequacy of existing institutions in India, we have to recognise the fact that their development in the different provinces has been unequal. Bombay, which has gone farthest in the matter, passed its Children's Act in 1924 and revised it in 1948. It has 17 Remand Homes and uses a large number of Probation Officers to look after juvenile delinquents. Thirty-two such officers have been appointed by the Government in addition to 150 working on a voluntary basis and seven appointed by non-official bodies. Bombay has 28 Certified Schools and 12 Associations which attend to the after-care of the children. No other province has gone so far, though Madras, under its Children's Act of 1920, has set up five Juvenile Courts and six Certified Schools. The C. P. passed an Act in 1928 and has 32 Probation Officers and one Certified School. West Bengal has a Children's Act, passed in 1922, and recently the West Bengal Government has initiated action to change the character of administration in respect of juvenile crime. East Punjab has an Act before the Assembly, while the U.P. Government are drafting a Bill for the purpose. We have no information of such Bills in either Assam, Bihar or Orissa.

The position with regard to the care and management of juvenile delinquents is thus obviously unsatisfactory. In the first place, not all the provinces that have Children's Acts on their statute-books are working them adequately. The work is chiefly confined to bigger cities and even there it leaves much to be desired. The Probation Officers have not the requisite training; nor have the magistrates of the Juvenile Courts the required qualifications. The Certified Schools are not working properly and after-care is all but non-existent.

A little consideration will show that in a matter like the problem of juvenile delinquency and the proper methods of dealing with it, there must be uniformity among the different provinces. It is also desirable that the practice of this country should

conform, as far as possible, to that of other enlightened countries of the world. In the U.K., the persons between the age of 8 and 17 are regarded as juveniles and are tried by special Juvenile Courts. Panels of magistrates are selected from Justices of Peace and, according to present regulations, these panels consist of two or three persons selected every three years. In metropolitan courts one of the magistrates must be a woman, while outside London this practice is observed as far as possible. The administration of the courts is under the Home Officer, but special Advisory Committees were set up in 1910 in order to make the attitude of the administration more progressive. In the past, punishment for the juvenile delinquents was in proportion to the gravity of the offences but in recent times, the trend is towards the reclamation of the future citizen rather than the punishment of an offender.

The change-over from punishment to education is almost complete in the U.S.A., and in some of the European countries. In the U.S.A., the upper age-limit for juvenile delinquents is 21. Up to the age of 18, the offender is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Juvenile Courts, but from 18 to 21 these courts exercise a concurrent jurisdiction with the ordinary courts. The trend of legislation is to make the Juvenile Courts independent of the ordinary system of criminal justice. In addition to the special magistrates, the U.S.A. provides for referees to assist in the hearing and disposition of the cases. Where the delinquent is a girl, it is the practice to associate a properly qualified woman referee with the Court. The U.S.A. has no advisory bodies, perhaps because social service agencies play an important part in all cases before the Juvenile Courts.

One feature which is common to both the U.K. and the U.S.A. is the effort to retain the child in his or her own surroundings. The U.S.A. has the largest provision for institutional care, but even there the trend of theory is away from institutional care to the education of the delinquent in his or her own home atmosphere. The following table gives an idea of the results of the disposition of cases in the Juvenile Courts in the U.K. and the U.S.A. :

|   | U.K. | U.S.A. |
|---|------|--------|
| Put on probation .. .. .  | 51%  | 43%    |
| Discharged after charge proved or bound over with supervision .. .. . | 32%  | 29%    |

|   |    |    |    | U.K. | U.S.A. |
|---|----|----|----|------|--------|
| Committed to schools                      | .. | .. | .. | 9%   | 16%    |
| Fined ..                                  | .. | .. | .. | 6%   | 6%     |
| Probation to non-official persons         |    | .. | .. |      | 2%     |
| Placement with board department or agency |    |    | .. | 2%   | 3%     |
| Other care ..                             | .. | .. | .. |      | 1%     |

The examples of the U.K. and the U.S.A. therefore indicate that the most progressive opinion in the world today favours that the juvenile offender must be regarded as a subject for education rather than punishment, and where it is necessary to send him to a reformatory, the character of such juvenile institutions must change. They should be educational institutions in the best sense of the term and not "houses of correction or penalty." These progressive countries have also found by experience that the best method of dealing with juvenile delinquents is to provide for their instruction without removing them from their homes. This requires a close co-operation with their families.

As I have already stated, there must be uniformity among the provinces with regard to measures for dealing with juvenile delinquency. It seems that this can best be achieved by means of central legislation with an enabling clause which will permit provinces to make such minor modifications as may be necessary. Notice of a private member's bill for dealing with some aspects of juvenile delinquency has already been given by Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh and is likely to come up during the next legislative session of the Constituent Assembly. After this Conference has decided on the main lines which such legislation should take, one of the two procedures may be followed. Either we may accept Dr. Deshmukh's bill with such modifications as may be necessary or, in the alternative, we may introduce a more comprehensive bill as a government measure.

I will briefly mention some of the points for consideration in this context. I have already referred to the fact that the trend of progressive opinion in Western countries favours the retention of juvenile delinquents in their homes. We have to consider whether in the prevailing conditions in India, juveniles will benefit more by being trained at home or by receiving instruction in special hostels established for the purpose.

Another point which the Conference will have to consider is the question of institutions dealing with juvenile delinquency.

While Juvenile Courts may remain in the administrative charge of the Home Department, assisted by the Education Department, it appears to me that the homes and schools for the juvenile delinquents must be directly administered by the Department of Education itself.

The Conference should also advise on the nature of instruction to be provided in such schools and homes. It is obvious that in addition to instruction in letters, there must also be a provision for training in some craft or trade. The provision of moral instructions seems to me to be equally important. This need not be narrow or sectarian, but wide ethical teaching of a universal type that will help in building up the character of the inmates.

The final point for consideration is the question of setting up an Advisory Committee in every province. These committees should be small and compact and should include Education Ministers, representatives of the Law and Home Departments and some social workers.

The second big problem before this Conference is the question of the medium of instruction at different stages of school education. The basic principle in this matter is not in dispute. The claims of the mother tongue are accepted by all but in spite of this, there are complaints that this principle is not always observed in practice. On the contrary, a language other than the mother tongue is sought to be imposed on the minorities.

India is a vast country with many languages. We must accept unreservedly that all these languages are Indian languages and deserve the same treatment. Where a province is linguistically homogeneous, there is no difficulty in acting on this principle, but even where the languages transcend provincial barriers, this should not affect our attitude to the problem. Since all the languages are Indian languages, what objection can there be if a minority in a particular province speaks or learns a language other than that of the majority? One thing is certain. Even if our aim is unity, it cannot be achieved by compulsion or imposition. Experience has shown that the only way to achieve unity in cultural or linguistic matters is to accept the existing differences. Any attempt to iron out the differences only leads to greater conflict and bitterness.

A constructive approach to this problem cannot but lead to an amicable settlement. It is therefore a matter for gratification

that the C.A.B. of Education, which is representative of all the provinces, has decided unanimously that primary instruction should, provided there is the minimum number of pupils available, be invariably given in the mother tongue, and that even in the secondary stage, instruction should be provided in the mother tongues if a sufficient number so desire. It is obvious that the mother tongue of the pupil means the language which is described as such by the guardian of the pupil. How can any one, except the parents, decide what is the mother tongue of the child ?

The conflict is not about the principle but about its application to concrete cases. Recently, the Congress Working Committee discussed the problem in all its aspects and, after a thorough examination of all the issues involved, passed a resolution which you have no doubt seen. I am myself convinced that the attitude adopted by the Working Committee is the right one, and I hope that you will be of the same opinion and approach this problem with clear vision and without any mental reservations. I am sure that if this is done, all causes for grievance will be removed. We can then solve this problem once and for all, so that there may be no future complaints from any minority.

A satisfactory solution of the problem of languages is more important in the context of our newly-won freedom. We have only now achieved our freedom and it is essential that every effort must be made to develop a sense of solidarity among the nation. If we allow grievances to grow over basic things like the question of the mother tongue, I am afraid that the consequences will affect all aspects of our national life. I need hardly stress this point before you as you are equally alive to the necessity of a satisfactory settlement of this question. I would only appeal to you that we should approach this question with large-hearted generosity and try to meet the wishes of the minorities in a manner which will leave no ground for dissatisfaction or complaint.

## INDIA AND ASIA

I am grateful to you for having accepted, at such short notice, my invitation to attend this preliminary meeting for the setting up of an organisation for cultural co-operation between the different Asian countries. I have, for a long time, felt that we must take steps to increase and strengthen such cultural contacts. From the earliest period of recorded history to almost the last days of the Moghul Empire, India's relations with her neighbours—both to her West and to her East—have been cordial and intimate. We remember the religious and cultural missions that went to countries so far flung as China and Japan on the one hand, and Egypt and Asia Minor on the other. We also remember the close trade relations which brought Indian traders and commercial men to the Byzantine courts or led them to colonise and develop outposts of Indian culture in the south-eastern regions of Asia. When we recall that all this was done at a time when the means of communication were meagre, if not primitive, we wonder even more at the closeness of contacts established then. With the loss of political independence, these ties were loosened and for over a century contact with our neighbours has been slight and occasional. I was convinced that we must take early steps for removing this lacuna and immediately on the attainment of our independence I decided to take action in the matter.

Following a Goodwill Mission from Iran, an Indo-Iranian Society was set up about four or five years ago. This was a move in the right direction, but it was not enough. We want to deepen our friendship and contact not only with Iran but also with Turkey and the countries of the Middle-East and China and our neighbours in South-East Asia. Such co-operation is also necessary from an international point of view. If we can create large blocks of goodwill in different areas of the world, grounds for suspicion and hatred will be removed and we can contribute to increased international understanding and amity.

---

*Address at the Conference for Cultural Co-operation between India and Asian Countries, New Delhi, August 21, 1949*

Experience has proved that cultural contacts are far more effective in uniting nations than political alliances. Political alliances are based on a spirit of bargaining while cultural contacts deepen mutual understanding. Such understanding is more necessary today in view of the new awakening which is taking place throughout the Eastern world. We have today, throughout the Orient, a movement for educational and cultural regeneration which demands close attention and sympathetic study.

For various reasons, India in recent years has been brought into contact with the countries of Europe and America in varying degrees. The need today is for a greater understanding with countries outside that orbit. The need of an organisation to promote such cultural contacts is obvious, but I must confess that I have found some difficulty in choosing an appropriate name for such a body. One body to cover all these regions may well prove unwieldy, and I can think of no suitable name to cover all of them. Geography itself has determined the lines on which such associations can be built. We must, on the one hand, establish closer contacts with Turkey, Afghanistan and the Middle-East countries. On the other we should also develop closer relations with China, Japan and the countries of South-East Asia. A solution which strikes me at first sight is to have two bodies and call one India-Middle-East Association, and the other India-South-East-Asia Association. Even this is not fully satisfactory as Turkey and Afghanistan would not be included in a Middle-East Association. Similarly, an India-South-East Asia Association would leave out countries like China, Japan and Korea. It seems that the only way of overcoming this difficulty is to describe the organisation as an Indian Council of Cultural Co-operation. This body would have two different sections—one for the Western group of countries including Afghanistan, Turkey and Egypt, and the other for the second group, including Korea, Japan and China.

Obviously, the main object of such a Council will be to maintain and increase cultural contacts between India and these countries. It should act as an agency for the exchange of information and literature as well as personnel. Short visits of professors and students from India to these countries and from these countries to India would go a long way to increase mutual understanding. The Council should, I feel, also maintain a



library and a reading room and arrange for the publication of magazines and other periodical literature.

A non-official organisation, if it is representative of the intelligentsia of the land, is, from the nature of the case, best suited to perform functions of this type. If we consider how such an organisation is to be set up, I think, you will agree with me that the best method would be to frame a constitution by which all the Indian universities and appropriate cultural societies may send three or four representatives to the proposed Council. In addition, the Council should include eminent men who have distinguished themselves in the field of art, letters or the humanities.

These are, however, matters of detail, which cannot be settled in this preliminary meeting. I have been considering how this Council can be set up most expeditiously, and have consulted others interested in the project. The best method seems to be as follows :

We should set up, today, an interim body which will define the aims and objects of the Council, draft its constitution and carry on other preliminary work. I would therefore request you to form a 'Provisional Committee' and appoint out of your numbers a sub-committee to work out the details of the scheme. This sub-committee should start work immediately and be instructed to complete its labours by October. The Council can then be formally inaugurated early in November, with representatives from the universities and cultural bodies from all over India.

## ART AND EDUCATION

I am glad to welcome you to this first All India Conference on Arts to be held under the auspices of the Central Government. In the past, India made valuable contributions to the cultural world, especially in the fields of literature, religious philosophy, architecture and the fine arts. While these achievements were due to the innate genius of the people, the encouragement and support extended by enlightened kings and other lovers of art and culture should not be overlooked. The great traditions of the past still remain, but, for reasons which are known to you, the patronage which was extended by the State to the fine arts and other expressions of culture, has been largely missing since India lost her independence. A situation has now been reached where, unless prompt steps are taken to preserve, develop and enrich the heritage of our cultural traditions, they may be damaged beyond repair. With the attainment of independence, the need for encouragement to the different forms of Indian culture has become even more insistent.

I may recall to your memory the steps which have been taken in recent years to ensure the preservation and enrichment of our cultural heritage. About four years ago, the Asiatic Society of Bengal put forward proposals for the establishment of a National Cultural Trust which would be entrusted with the task of stimulating and promoting the culture of the country in all its aspects and represent the various cultural elements in our country. They proposed that the Trust should function as an autonomous and independent body predominantly non-official in its constitution and should operate through appropriate agencies. There should for the purpose be three Academies, namely, an Academy of Letters to deal with Indian languages, literature, philosophy and history, an Academy of Arts (including graphic, plastic and applied art) and Architecture, and an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music. The object of these Academies would be to develop, promote and foster studies in the subjects with

which they deal, with a view to maintaining the highest possible standards of achievement. The Trust should have the following additional functions in addition to those performed by the Academies :

- (i) to encourage cultural education and research with particular reference to the preservation and development of traditional Indian culture in relation to such subjects as literature, architecture, sculpture, painting, dancing, dramatic art and music;
- (ii) to acquire for the State sites, monuments, manuscripts, pictures or other objects of importance from the point of view of Indian culture;
- (iii) to advise the Government of India and the Provincial Governments in regard to cultural matters;
- (iv) to co-operate with the universities in the development of activities in the purely cultural fields;
- (v) to co-operate with the learned societies of India in order to encourage and expand the cultural aspects of the work now performed by them;
- (vi) to publish suitable popular literature on cultural matters;
- (vii) to maintain close touch with all parts of India (including states) by holding periodical conferences;
- (viii) to organise archaeological and other cultural missions to foreign countries and generally to develop and extend existing cultural contacts between India and other countries.

It was also proposed that the Trust should be financed by an endowment of four crores of rupees, which would make it independent of annual grants from the Central or the Provincial Governments. The Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education which considered the proposals of the Asiatic Society of Bengal were of the opinion that such endowment was necessary if the trustees were to function properly. The Committee recommended that the Central Government should contribute half the amount while the Provincial Governments and the Indian States should contribute the balance in equal proportions. ✱

The Government of India accepted the principle underlying the recommendations of the Central Advisory Board of Education and arrangements were made to bring the Trust into exis-

tence as soon as possible. A sum of rupees eight lakh was therefore proposed in the budget for 1947-48, but the partition of the country and the disturbances which followed prevented the execution of the plan. During 1948-49, the proposal was again considered, but in view of the financial difficulties from which the country is now suffering, the establishment of the Trust had to be postponed. Nevertheless, a sum of Rs. 1 lakh was provided in the budget for 1949-50 to carry on the preliminary work in connection with the foundation of the Trust.

Instead of spending the major portion of this inadequate amount for the setting up of a secretariat for the Trust, we considered it more advisable to utilise the money, as far as possible, in schemes for the promotion of art in the country. I therefore decided that we should have three conferences during the year, the first with representatives of the visual arts, the second with men of letters and the third with representatives of dance, drama and music. It is in accordance with that programme that the present Conference is being held and I look forward to this gathering of representative artists from all over the country to offer advice to the Government in respect of some of the most urgent issues before us. I may, however, draw your attention to the fact that when the Asiatic Society of Bengal originally proposed the establishment of a National Cultural Trust and even when the Government of India first accepted the principle underlying that recommendation, we did not have in our view the proposed Indian National Commission for co-operation with Unesco. Now that this Commission has been established, I feel that we should re-examine the whole issue and consider whether much of the work which was originally to have been performed by the Trust cannot be performed by one of the Sub-Commissions or sections of the National Commission. You are aware that the National Commission is divided into three Sub-Commissions, namely, the Sub-Commission for Education, the Sub-Commission for Culture and the Sub-Commission for Science. Much of the work which the Cultural Trust was to have done would be co-terminus with that to be performed by the Sub-Commission for Culture. In fact, the three Academies of the proposed Cultural Trust, namely, the Academy of Letters, the Academy of Dance, Drama and Music and the Academy of the Visual Arts could very easily be formed under the aegis of

the Cultural Sub-Commission of the National Commission. This, however, is a matter which requires further consideration, and I would at this stage only request all members to keep in mind the possibility of such integration of work under the National Commission. This will not only make for simplicity, but also save considerable expense in money, men and energy.

Whether the work of promoting the artistic and cultural life of the country is to be carried out through a Trust or through the National Commission, the most important point is that there should be facilities for their preservation and development. Members of this Conference are perhaps aware that the Government of India have, as a first step towards the encouragement of Indian Music, promoted the establishment of two academies—one of Hindustani Music at Lucknow and the other of Karnataka Music at Madras. The object of these academies will be to promote advanced studies and research in these branches of Indian Music. The Government have also tried to encourage young painters and sculptors by the award of suitable scholarships. In 1947-48, six scholarships each of the value of Rs. 2,500 were given to promising young artists, and this year we have offered eight scholarships of equal value to young artists who are prepared to devote their talents to the revival and development of art in the context of social education in rural areas. The selection of scholars will be made by a committee of experts consisting of the principals of recognised art schools, and the works of the candidates are being displayed in an exhibition organised in connection with this Conference. It is also proposed to establish an Artists' Travelling Fund to encourage amateur artists. The Government of India have provided an amount of Rs. 15,000 and requested the provinces to make contributions to the fund. I fully realise that these are extremely inadequate measures, but we must recognise the grave financial difficulties through which we are passing. The fact that we have not allowed these difficulties to stand in our way and have made a beginning, even though on a meagre scale, should serve as an earnest of the future policy of the Government of India in promoting the development of our art and culture.

You are also aware that the Government of India are contemplating the establishment of a National Museum where the finest exhibits of Indian art will be collected and preserved for the

nation. The entire collection of Amrita Sher Gil's paintings has been purchased, and, in addition, the Government have acquired valuable exhibits from several well-known private collections in the country. As part of this programme, it is proposed to attempt to secure such of our art heritage as has gone out of the country and may be available on reasonable terms. You are, no doubt, aware that some of the finest specimens of our art, sculpture and miniature, went out of the country long ago. Some of these are in national museums in foreign countries and it may be difficult, if not impossible, to bring them back. There are, however, other objects in the possession of private collectors or museums which come into the market from time to time and may be regained. I think you will agree that we should try to get back such objects wherever possible, and where the originals cannot be secured we should, at any rate, obtain copies made by competent artists, so that our representation of Indian art may not remain incomplete.

Before, however, any steps in this direction can be taken it is necessary to have full knowledge about the number of such objects and their distribution. We have some knowledge of exhibits in public museums and galleries. There are records also of some of the private collections, but there are many objects of art of which we have no information at all. I have already written to all our representatives abroad to inform us as early as possible about the number, description and location of art objects scattered within their respective areas. I, however, feel that non-official advice from experts is essential for the purpose, and I would ask you to consider whether this Conference may set up a small committee to make an inventory of such art objects as are at present abroad and advise the Government on the best possible methods to secure either the originals or their copies.

Another important question which requires the attention of this Conference is that of the relation of art to education in general. It is a sad commentary on our present system of education that art has either no place or plays a very minor role in our general education. One reason for this is, of course, the very one-sided view of education we have had in the past. Till now our education has aimed at developing only the intellect of the child. Even this is perhaps an over-generous estimate.

The present system of education has not always been conducive to the development of the whole intellect, but only encouraged

the growth of linguistic efficiency among our pupils. This is one reason why there are so many people who display all the external signs of high education and at the same time exhibit in their attitudes, beliefs and conduct a totally uneducated mind.

It is today realised that no education can be complete which does not pay proper attention to the development and refinement of the emotions. This can be done best through the provision of facilities for training the sensibilities by the practice of one of the fine arts. Apart from the general question of developing the finest aspects of personality through artistic education, there is also the immediate utility of such education in developing our manual skill and perceptive sensibility. It is recognised today that education at pre-primary or nursery stage can be best imparted by training the child in the matching of colours, shapes and sizes. This releases the creative instinct in the child and thus diverts his superfluous energy from merely destructive channels into those of social behaviour and decorum. Thus, whether from the point of view of training of the emotions or refinement of sentiments or development of manual skill and creative urge, the importance of art as an element of education cannot be over-emphasised.

The obvious implication of this is that a society is healthy and well-balanced if training in and appreciation of arts are widespread among its members. The modern malaise of society in which individuals are torn and divided and society ripen with a hundred conflicts is the result of the fact that the arts have been divorced from intimate contact with life at a thousand points. I may recall to your minds that there was no distinction recognised between art and craft in the past. In the olden days, the craftsmen who produced objects for the use of society were also simultaneously artists. On the other hand, artists took pride in the excellence of their craft and never hesitated to take their full share in social production. One of the unfortunate results of the Industrial Revolution and the development of the capitalist system of production has been the divorce between art and craft. The result is that the artists tend to look down upon the craftsmen as mere artisans. The labourers who produce goods for consumption are, on the other hand, equally suspicious of the social and seemingly useless activities of the artists. In the sequel, both art and craft have suffered, so that art is today divorced from

our immediate requirements while craft has degenerated into a mechanical manipulation from which all joy of creation has disappeared.

120 It is for the artists to attempt to bridge this gulf. You may remember the efforts of William Morris to overcome this breach by ensuring that even commercial products must have the highest artistic qualities. This would immediately result in an improvement of taste throughout society and thus enrich the life of the common man. It would, on the other hand, be of equal service to the artist himself. He could in such a context depend upon the support of society as a whole instead of a handful of rich patrons here and there. Much of the insecurity and poverty from which the artist suffers today is due to lack of social support. 1 The moment he re-establishes contacts with society, the causes of insecurity disappear and the results would be of advantage to art and craft and to society at large.

2 In a growing democracy the need of this closer relation between the artist and the average man has become even more important. It is the standard of the common man which determines the standard of society. If therefore the life of the common man is poor and devoid of artistic qualities, there is no possibility of a rich and flourishing art. Artists must therefore play their full part in the education of the people, and it is for this Conference to suggest to the Government how best this could be achieved through museums, art galleries, travelling exhibitions and any other methods that may be necessary.

3 This Conference may also appoint a small committee of experts who may advise the Government on the selection of some of the finest specimens of Indian art which would then be reproduced and made available to the people at large. It is obvious that the finest masterpieces will never be accessible to all individuals. Even if they are collected in the museums, only those who live in the cities where these museums are situated or those who have the means of travelling there, will enjoy such masterpieces. If, however, these masterpieces are made available in suitable copies at prices within the reach of everybody, one of the greatest obstacles to a general spread of art appreciation throughout the community will be removed.

I will conclude by drawing your attention to one other point. In the past, great artists enjoyed patronage of kings, courtiers



and other men of affluence. In the modern world where democracy is the order of the day, the artist must look to the State for patronage. In the present stage of development of art appreciation among the people, this, however, involves a danger that the most original and talented artists may not receive that recognition which is their due. Excellence in art, as elsewhere, can be properly appreciated only by those who have in them the same excellence. However much we may desire that the standard of excellence must be high throughout the community, we must confess that this is not yet the case. In order therefore to ensure that the most powerful and original geniuses among the artists get their proper recognition, I would suggest for your consideration the establishment of an Academy of Art more or less on the lines of the world famous French Academy.

You will remember that the French Academy has only a handful of members and academicians. Its membership is the highest honour that can fall to the lot of a Frenchman. Many are the scholars, artists or scientists who have worked for this honour throughout their life and have not been admitted to the distinguished company of the academicians. Such exclusiveness has given to the membership of the French Academy a distinction which has few equals anywhere else in the world. I would therefore be happy if in India we could establish an Academy of Arts, with a membership of not more than 30, confined only to people who by their creative work have established their position beyond dispute. It is not necessary that the membership should always be full. In fact, if we institute the Academy now, I cannot see how more than a dozen members can be elected straightaway. Whatever be the number of academicians so elected, they alone should have the right to elect their fellow members and once the full quota is complete, no one would be admitted to the Academy till a vacancy had occurred through death or resignation. If standards are once laid down, I have no doubt that membership of the Academy will serve as an incentive to the highest endeavours in the field of Art.

These are some of the problems which this Conference must consider. I hope we will be able to arrive at judicious and balanced decisions, so that the cause of art in independent India may flourish and we may recapture and enhance the glories of the Gupta and the Moghul periods.

## SOCIAL EDUCATION IN THE RURAL AREAS

7 On behalf of the Government and the people of India, I extend a most cordial welcome to all of you. We appreciate the spirit in which you have accepted our invitation, for in spite of the difficulties imposed by distance and by pre-occupations in your own countries you have responded to our call. I also wish to place on record my thanks to Unesco for having acceded to our request to hold its first Asian Seminar in our country and extending to us assistance and co-operation in all possible ways.

120 You have met here today to discuss what is perhaps the most important and vital problem for all Asia. The welfare, progress and prosperity of any State depend upon the quality of its citizens, and this in turn depends upon the education which moulds their character and shapes their thoughts. Important as a sound system of education is for all countries, it is still more important for the countries of Asia. Here we are witnessing a new awakening after centuries of slumber and quiescence. The past glorious traditions of the Asian countries demand that this new awakening must bring to the world a new message even as our ancient civilisations sent forth to the farthest corners of the globe, for Asia gave to the world its religions, philosophies, cultures and civilisations.

The challenge of our ancient traditions and the spiritual poverty of our immediate past both require from the peoples of Asia an exceedingly great effort for the reconstruction of their lives in all spheres. This involves a basic reconstruction of our modes of education, for without such education we cannot fulfil our hopes. Ours is essentially a democratic age and the spirit of equality, fraternity and liberty is sweeping over all the peoples of the world. The Asian countries must reconstruct their polity and their society in conformity with this spirit.

It is universally recognised today that education of the future

*Inaugural address at the Unesco Seminar on Rural Adult Education, Mysore, November 2, 1949*

citizens is one of the prime duties of the State. On such education depends our prosperity and welfare. Of even greater urgency is the problem of educating the adult population. They determine the present which in its turn will shape our future destiny. Education of the future generations can only be planned if the present generation recognises the importance of such education. Material prosperity or spiritual welfare cannot be achieved unless the citizen of today accepts the challenge of these values. An educated electorate is, thus, essential for the survival and proper functioning of modern democracy.

When we contrast the demands which democracy makes upon citizens of a State with the actual condition of education in the different countries of Asia, the picture is one of grave and anxious concern. It is true that in some exceptional cases the problem has been largely mastered. We have Japan which according to figures available for 1946 has a literacy figure of 99 per cent and illiteracy of only 1 per cent. Lebanon in the Middle East is also reputed to have a high literacy figure. In 1945-46, literacy in Turkey was 60 per cent in the towns and 40 per cent in the villages. The Philippines with its figure of 52.6 per cent is also comparatively well-placed. The same remarks would apply to Ceylon, Thailand, Burma and China. We cannot, however, gauge the magnitude of the problem by percentages alone. China has a literacy figure of over 50 per cent. If we take the total population of China to be 450 millions, this would give an adult population of about 225 millions. It is unlikely that the percentage of literacy will be the same for adults as for children and adolescents. Even if this questionable assumption is granted, the number of adult illiterates in China would be some 125 millions.

If we take the figures for India, we find that in pre-partition India the total number of literates, according to the 1941 Census, was 37 millions. Assuming that the number of adult literates is about 40 per cent of the total number of literates, this gives a figure of a little over 15 millions. This refers only to the pre-partition Indian provinces. Partition meant a loss of about 26 per cent of the total population and assuming that the reduction in the number of literates was in the same proportion and allowing for fluctuations owing to normal processes of birth and death, we may put the figure for adult literates in the Indian provinces

after partition at roughly 11 millions. To this we have to add the number of adult literates in the states. This is estimated to be about 6 millions. The number of adult literates in India on the basis of 1941 Census is therefore approximately 17 millions against a total adult population of about 180 millions, which gives a literacy percentage of slightly less than 10 for adults. This is not only unsatisfactory but positively disturbing. Naturally, the Government of India propose to give the first priority to a programme of social education in its schemes of educational development for the country.

You have met here today to devise ways and means for solving this colossal problem. As I have already said, this is the problem of problems for Asia. I would go further and say that this is the problem of problems for all countries of the world. Scientific progress and technical achievement have today unified the world into one community without creating the psychological conditions in which men and women all over the world can live in peace and amity. The conquests of science have led to a situation where disaster threatens mankind unless we can conquer hatred, suspicion and distrust among peoples. I have no doubt in my mind that all governments of the world desire peace and yet it is a strange paradox that all of them adopt measures whose inevitable consequence is a world conflagration. How is one to explain this seeming contradiction between the intentions of intelligent people and the course of action followed by them?

I have pondered deeply over this question and to me it seems that the reason for the paradox is to be sought in the mechanism of the State, which proves at times too powerful for even the most gifted individual. Governments are composed of men who follow certain forms and traditions. Even though the men are often well-intentioned, they inherit a legacy of governmental procedure and commitments which ties their hands. The inertia of the machine proves stronger than the energy of the individual. We find in consequence that while most political leaders talk in terms of peace, their actions are guided by considerations of defending and safeguarding vested interests. If mankind is to overcome this impasse and achieve conditions where peace and tranquillity can become a reality between individuals and nations, the common people of the world must assert themselves.

They have made no commitments and are not tied down by any governmental procedure. If they take an intelligent interest in the affairs of the world and demand that the governance of man must be in the interest of peace, then and then alone can the different governments of the world be compelled to pursue policies which will lead to peace instead of war.

122 This is where the need for adult education—in our country we have termed it Social Education—becomes imperative. By social education we mean an education for the complete man. It will give him literacy so that the knowledge of the world may become accessible to him. It will teach him how to harmonise himself with his environment and make the best of the physical conditions in which he subsists. It is intended to teach him improved crafts and modes of production so that he can achieve economic betterment. It also aims at teaching him the rudiments of hygiene both for the individual and the community so that our domestic life may be healthy and prosperous. The last but not the least, this education should give him training in citizenship so that he obtains some insight into the affairs of the world and can help his Government to take decisions which will make for peace and progress.

2 You will, no doubt, examine all the implications of such a programme of social education for the masses, but there are several outstanding issues which readily come to my mind. The first is the problem of arousing and maintaining the interest of the adult illiterate. It is obvious that his psychology is different from that of the child. He may be illiterate but his mind is mature. The approach which may be suitable for children would, in many cases, repulse him. His books must therefore avoid childish subjects and yet at the same time deal with problems affecting him in a language simple enough for him. The effort of learning the script must also be lessened so that his interest does not flag. I am sure that the Seminar will examine various methods of making him literate and suggest the use of suitable modern devices—psychological or visual—to overcome the inertia of age and the innate pride of the adult.

3 Our programme of social education must, however, be more than a mere literacy drive. This is a point which I need not labour. What I would like the Seminar to examine is the best method of teaching the adult illiterate subjects which are of vital

interest to him. We must largely depend on oral teaching, but oral instruction has certain limitations. The experts assembled in this Seminar will, I hope, indicate to the participating countries the emphasis to be given to oral instruction, the use of books, demonstrations, the use of visual aids, lectures or exhibitions in teaching different subjects like hygiene, elementary arithmetic, elements of citizenship, or simple problems of business and commerce.

Another peculiar problem which faces all Asian countries and therefore also India is the problem of finding the requisite number of teachers for a programme of social education. It is, I believe, generally agreed that adults require greater personal care and attention than children. The ratio of teacher to taught must therefore be higher in their case than with minors. We require in India about a million teachers to deal with children of school age who constitute only about 12½ per cent of the total population. For adult illiterates who will constitute almost 50 per cent of the population, we would, even on the same basis, require about 4 million teachers. If, in addition to this, we make allowance for the higher ratio necessary in their case, the number of teachers required may amount to almost 5 millions. Against this, we can, of course, balance the factor that the adult education courses will be of short duration and perhaps last for about 3 months at a time for giving them the first stage of literacy. Even then, the number of teachers to be continually employed on the adult education drive will be over a million.

To find the million teachers for school children is difficult enough; but if in addition we have to find another million for our programmes of adult education, the problem becomes almost insuperable. We are considering in India the possibility of utilising the basic school teacher for our programme of social education. We are also examining a proposal to use some kind of social conscription by which all educated persons will be required to contribute to this national service for a specified period. If all students after matriculation are compelled to teach for even six months, it would, of course, go some way towards helping the solution, but even then the gap to be overcome would be considerable.

There is also the question how far the basic school teachers or young collegians will prove suitable for such a programme of

9  
24  
120  
National Education. The teaching of small children requires in the teacher certain habits and attitudes which he may not be able to shed when addressing adults. Similarly, it is a problem whether young men and women just out of school will have the necessary patience and insight to be successful teachers of adults. I would therefore urge you to examine the different aspects of this intricate question and make recommendations that may be of use to us and other Asian countries.

There are numerous other problems, but I will mention only one more. It has been our unfortunate experience—and I have no doubt other countries must have faced the same situation—that many people who have learnt to read and write in schools lapse into illiteracy. If this were not so, all children who had once been to school would have remained literate. The percentage of literacy in all countries would then have been appreciably greater. The distinguished educationists assembled in this Seminar must advise us how best to prevent this relapse into illiteracy. There is the problem of suitable literature for new literates, of continuation classes, of extension lectures, of visual aids and exhibitions, films and pictures and other devices which may be used. All of them, however, involve money and it is common experience that there is not enough money for the purpose. I hope therefore that the Seminar will suggest priorities in the use of such aids and also draw up a scheme which will enable the best possible utilisation of our limited resources.

2  
I am glad to find that you have chosen for the Seminar subjects for study which cover almost all these aspects. I have no doubt that the distinguished assemblage of educators and experts from all over the world will make valuable contributions in dealing with all these problems. As far as I can see, there is no difference in our ideals. The difficulty arises in defining the methods through which those ideals are to be attained. I am confident that the deliberations of the Seminar will yield fruitful results and suggest to the different Asian and non-Asian States how best to achieve the ideals we have set before ourselves.

It is not my purpose today to offer any opinion as to what recommendations this Seminar should make to Unesco and its member states in order to fulfil the objectives which Unesco has set before itself. Unesco has rightly pointed out that all conflicts begin in the mind of man and therefore the root of conflict must

3 be weeded out of his mind. I have no doubt that the Seminar will make recommendations to this effect and I am as anxious as all of you that our joint deliberations will enable us to suggest concrete measures for the attainment of these ends.

11 I would, before I conclude, like to draw the attention of the distinguished participants in the Seminar to the lesson of Indian history. India had been at her best when her doors were wide open to all who came from abroad. She freely partook of whatever lessons the world had to teach and equally freely gave the world her best. The acceptance of unity in diversity has been her motto throughout the ages. The essence of this principle is a large and widehearted toleration in which differences are recognised and given their due. The Indian genius has always recognised that truth has many facets, and conflict and hatred arise because people claim a monopoly of truth and virtue.

5 This was the lesson of India in the days of her glory. This is the lesson which Mahatma Gandhi has taught anew in the context of the modern age. His message to the Indian people was one of toleration, goodwill and love for all. Hatred, he said, is born of weakness and fear and he therefore exhorted his countrymen to shed fear. He believed in a new education which would reshape the character of man. Its aim is to eradicate the impulse to exploitation, violence and ill-will from the individual and the society. He not only preached the need for love and toleration for all but laid down his life to vindicate these eternal values. If we can instil in our private and public conduct his spirit of tolerance and large-hearted humanity so that divergences can exist side by side without conflict, we will have solved one of the most difficult problems of the modern world.

6 I have to meet you again on the 4th of December. You will, in the meantime, have examined many of these problems and framed tentative recommendations. I expect to keep in touch with your work and hope that on that occasion I will have some concrete suggestions to make for the implementation of your findings. I am convinced that this Seminar, jointly planned by Unesco and the Government of India and built up through the co-operation of nations from all over the world, will attain its objectives and mark an important mile-stone in the history of the development of adult education throughout the world.

62



## II\*

11 It is just over a month ago that we had assembled to participate in the inauguration of this Unesco Seminar on Rural Adult Education. We had then met with high hopes and intentions and I am glad that though only a month has passed we can now look back with satisfaction on the work accomplished. I must sincerely congratulate the Director, the Consultants, the Chairmen of the Groups, the delegates and other participants of the Seminar for the energy and competence with which they have carried out their important task. I have every hope that all the countries participating in this Seminar will benefit by the recommendations you have made and carry out your constructive suggestions for solving one of the most pressing problems of the world. I can assure you that so far as India is concerned, we shall examine every one of your recommendations with care and sympathy in order to give effect to them as far and as soon as may be possible.

2 I cannot naturally go into any details regarding your various recommendations. They are the result of hard work and careful thought and deserve close attention before any judgment is passed on them. I must, however, express my sense of satisfaction for the way in which you have set down to work and divided the different aspects of a colossal problem for study by special groups. The provision of literacy may not by itself be enough for the education of adults, but there is no denying that it is the basis of all real education.

3 The first Study Group which dealt with different methods of teaching reading to adults has made suggestions which will be of value to all countries. The second Group dealing with specific problems of health and family life has discussed questions which are vital for any scheme of social welfare. No community can flourish until and unless the individuals constituting it are happy and no individual can be happy without health and a satisfactory home life. Women have a special role to play in this and I am glad to hear that your Group has not overlooked the imperative necessity of securing to women an adequate knowledge of home-craft and health. The third Group dealing with the

\* Address at the closing session of the Unesco Seminar on Rural Adult Education, Mysore, December 4, 1949

economic aspects of rural adult education has attacked what is perhaps the most immediate concern to all rural adult educators. Unless the economic conditions of the villagers can be immediately improved, there is little hope of attracting and still less of retaining adults in any literacy course. Your suggestions about methods of extension work and securing the help of Unesco in the preparation of posters and other illustrated material will, I have no doubt, receive the consideration of every participating country. The fourth Group deals with the intangible but real problem of citizenship and the role of the rural community in society and the State. The valuable sociological data secured from different countries are in themselves a material gain, but still more fruitful results may follow from the suggestion of setting up working camps in the rural areas to provide scope for co-operative activities in various fields.

I must not, however, anticipate the action which different Governments may take on your various recommendations. So far as India is concerned, I can say that I am greatly impressed by a suggestion made for the setting up of some centralised agency to guard against the possible dissipation of energy, enthusiasm and competence through unnecessary duplication of efforts. I have felt that some such agency is necessary to advise the states and the provinces of the Indian Union, not only on the general principles of education, but also on the co-ordination of steps, procedure and methods in order to achieve the best results at the minimum cost.

Another topic discussed in the Seminar which has appealed to me and which I propose to pursue in our country is the setting up of some machinery to carry out a vocabulary study of the different Indian languages with a view to finding out what words are most commonly used in different parts of the country. I may tell you that even though there are 13 main languages recognised in our Constitution, these languages cannot by any means be regarded as completely alien to one another. They have large common vocabularies, and if allowance is made for the mutations due to the factors of space, time and pronunciation, the number of common words will be larger still. I have for some time had in mind a plan for the collection of common Hindi words which are found in all the other Indian languages. I am convinced that when this work has been accomplished, the non-

Hindi speaking people of India will find that they already possess a large vocabulary of Hindi words, and with the addition of a few more common Hindi words they can acquire without difficulty a working knowledge of Hindi. I feel that the textbooks in Hindi for the non-Hindi speaking people should be prepared on the basis of such graded vocabularies. The Government will take the necessary steps in this respect, but I must pay my tribute to the many non-official agencies which have been carrying out valuable work on these lines for many years.

People all over the world are beginning to recognise that one of the surest ways of securing international peace is fundamental education for the peoples of the world on the lines envisaged by Unesco. Unesco has already begun this programme, but much more remains to be done and I hope that its service will be available to all the member and even non-member States by the provision of charts, visual aids, posters and other illustrated material to impart social education in the fullest sense of the term. The language of pictures is universal and can overcome the barriers created by differences of verbal languages. Linguists can therefore help to prepare posters on questions of health, hygiene, home and simple arts and crafts which can serve the interests of the people all over the world. Equally valuable to me is the suggestion to follow up this Asian Seminar by regional seminars in the different parts of the country. I recognise the value of studies carried out in such seminars where comparative detachment from political and administrative stress and the preoccupations of day-to-day routine will enable educators to study problems in their proper perspective. So far as India is concerned, we shall take advantage not only of the experiences gained in this Seminar but also utilise these experiences for the organisation of further seminars for the different linguistic areas.

Before I conclude, I must once again thank the Director of the Seminar, the consultants, the delegates and other participants, for the devotion and energy with which they have worked. I must make special mention of Dr. S. Y. Chu who came and joined us in spite of the political vicissitudes of his country. He could not stay till the end, but the very fact that he came is evidence of his devotion to the cause of education and Unesco.

I hope your stay in our country has been pleasant and has led to the formation of friendship and contacts that may be of mutual value. I must also thank the Mysore Government for the generosity and efficiency with which they have helped us in making this, the first Unesco Seminar on Asian soil, such a success.

3  
112

## PROGRAMME FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION

4 This is the third meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education since India attained her independence. It is now necessary in the light of experience we have gained in the last three years to consider carefully and dispassionately our hopes and plans for the education of free India in the coming years. It was but natural that after the attainment of freedom we should have considered ambitious programmes for the expansion of our national education. This was necessary as education is one of the most important of our nation building activities. We had also to make special efforts to wipe out the deficiency in education created by over a hundred years of foreign rule. It was in this spirit that the Ministry of Education prepared a programme of work for the next ten years.

5 It was obvious that we had to build our educational structure from its very basis and improve it both qualitatively and quantitatively. The number of our literates was and is lamentably low. Even the literacy that is imparted is not of the highest quality. In view of the demand for an all-round expansion and improvement, it became necessary to fix an order of priorities, so that our limited resources were not frittered away in attempting too many things simultaneously. You will remember that it was with this object in view that the Ministry of Education, with your general support, proposed that our immediate objectives should be four, namely :

- (i) the provision of basic education on a universal, free and compulsory basis for all our school-going children;
- (ii) the provision of adult education in order to wipe out the colossal illiteracy of our masses;
- (iii) the improvement and expansion of technical education in order to solve the problem of manpower for industrial and technical development; and 7

- (iv) the reorganisation and improvement of university education from a national point of view.

The Post-War Development Plan laid down that it would take 40 years to implement a scheme of basic education and cost the nation a sum of Rs. 8,000 crore at the rate of about Rs. 200 crore a year. You will remember that after the attainment of independence we all felt that the period was too long and exigencies of our national economy demanded a reduction in the cost. Nor was this all. We realised that lack of finance was not the only obstacle in our way. A truly national system of education demanded the creation of a new spirit among our educated men and women, so that they would regard the spread of education as a national obligation for all. The question of buildings had also to be faced from a new angle, for if we waited for the construction programme envisaged in the Post-War Plan, the introduction of compulsory, universal and free education would be deferred indefinitely. We therefore felt that we must utilise whatever accommodation was available in the land and employ the entire educated personnel of the land either on a voluntary basis or through some form of social conscription. It was with this end in view that we prepared a plan of junior basic education to be implemented in ten years and at a greatly reduced cost.

In the field of adult education, we revised our programme so that it became one of social education for training in citizenship and aimed at making at least 50 per cent of illiterate adults literate in the course of the next ten years.

You considered these reports last year and generally approved of the recommendations. I agree with your views and feel that in the light of the modifications suggested, we may prepare our programmes on the basis of co-operation between the State and the people, so that the State may extend the necessary facilities and services on the one hand and the people on the other supplement on a voluntary basis the efforts of the State.

To improve our standards of technical education, the programme that we had envisaged was the establishment of four higher technological institutes in addition to the strengthening of existing institutions. Considerations of finance did not permit us to start with all the four, but we thought that at least a beginning should be made. The Eastern Higher Technological Institute near Calcutta was taken in hand without even waiting for the

construction of all the necessary buildings. The scheme is in progress and I hope that the next academic year will see the first batch of teachers and students working in this Institute. Simultaneously, it has been our aim to strengthen the existing institutions by improving their quality and increasing their capacity.

In the field of university education, the Indian University Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Professor Radhakrishnan was asked to submit its report within nine months. You will be glad to know that it has already done so. The Report is before you and one of the main functions of this meeting of the Board will be to consider the recommendations of the Commission.

I have even at the risk of some repetition recapitulated these points, so that we may be in a position to judge where we are. You will appreciate that so far as planning is concerned, the Ministry is ready with its programme in all the four fields mentioned by me. I would therefore like to draw your attention to the obstacle which stands in the way of their immediate implementation.

You will remember that in 1947 the problem of refugees from Western Pakistan absorbed almost all the energy and a major portion of the finances of the nation. There was therefore no hope of adequate funds being available for educational expansion in the immediate future, but in spite of these difficulties, the budget for 1948-49 saw an increase in provision for education. During 1948-49, our scheme for educational reconstruction reached a suitable stage for implementation. It was my hope that the 1949-50 budget would enable us to make a beginning with the programme.

In spite of our best efforts, we were, however, unable to provide sufficient funds even for the very modest programme of expansion which we had framed. Our intention was to provide for an amount of Rs. 11 crore for 1949-50, as this would enable us to start the basic education programme and undertake the preliminary work for social education. Our financial position, however, allowed us to provide only about Rs. 6 crore. We accepted the situation, as we hoped that at least during 1950-51, conditions would improve sufficiently to enable us to carry out the scheme which had been carefully prepared and repeatedly revised in order to cut down cost.

To our great disappointment even this expectation is now belied. Within six months of the adoption of this year's budget, we have had to face a financial crisis of such magnitude as to force a reduction of ten to twenty per cent in the already approved budgets. This was followed by devaluation and still further difficulties with the result that our current year's budget has been severely curtailed. Instead of going ahead as we had originally planned, we suddenly realised that we had to retreat. For 1949-50, we had to surrender about Rs. 153 lakh out of a total budget of about Rs. 588 lakh. The result is that a country with a population of almost 350 millions and with hardly 14 per cent literates cannot provide more than Rs. 4.5 crore from its Central revenues for education !

The problem before us today is not what schemes we should prepare for national education. These are already there. We have to consider whether we can take any forward step at all in the immediate future. It is true that education is a Provincial subject, but, in the existing circumstances, the problem of education cannot be solved unless the Centre assumes appropriate responsibility for its expansion and growth. We are as keenly conscious of this as all of you and this makes the present situation even more painful to us. There are no two opinions about the need for the provision of education on an expanded and improved scale. The programmes are also ready, but, in spite of the urgency, we cannot go ahead because of the shortage of funds.

I may bring to your notice the policy which the British Government have adopted in a similar situation. In a recent circular, the Ministry of Education of that Government have said :

"Local education authorities will be aware that the economic difficulties of the country have called for a close review of Government expenditure. They will also have noted the announcements that the Government do not contemplate any major change in policy which would result in a reduction in the scope of the services for which the Minister of Education is responsible.

The Minister wishes to make it clear in particular that :

- (a) there is to be no going back on reforms already instituted or on the plans by which the number of teachers / 1 in primary and secondary schools will be increased with the increasing school population;



- (b) there is to be no cut in the extent of the building programmes already approved to meet the increasing number of children, the needs of new housing estates and of technical education. Every effort, however, must be made to reduce costs. A separate circular is being sent to the authorities on these points and on the measures which have to be taken to reduce capital investment for other educational purposes ;
- (c) schemes for further education, including plans for county colleges, not yet completed should be proceeded with and submitted in due course ;
- (d) arrangements for maintaining an adequate number of university awards should proceed concurrently with termination of the Further Education and Training Scheme, and discussions between universities and local education authorities on the adoption of a new procedure for local awards based on paragraph 34 of the Working Party's Report should continue.

There is, however, no point in merely discussing these difficulties and obstacles. What we have to do is to devise ways and means so that funds may be found for education and other constructive projects. There is no immediate prospect of a large increase in our revenues. Funds can therefore be found only by diverting a larger proportion of our available resources to education and other nation building activities. As you are aware, the main burden on our finance today is due to the expenditure on the import of food, the rehabilitation of refugees and defence. It is obvious that welfare services cannot be expanded till these burdens are lightened. There is every hope that the expenses on the food account will be diminished and ultimately disappear. The expenditure for rehabilitation cannot be curtailed till our displaced people have been re-established on a sound basis, but it is diminishing with the flux of time. There remains Defence. During the British regime, we have always complained that the Defence expenditure was excessive. After the attainment of freedom, it was therefore natural to expect savings in this field, but circumstances took a turn, where in spite of all our efforts, the expenditure on Defence had to be further increased. The Government are, however, keenly alive to the situation and I can assure you that we are examining every possible avenue of saving and economy.

The need for education is accepted in principle by every one. It is necessary to wipe out the illiteracy of 150 years and make our people efficient, productive and responsible citizens of a democratic State. The new Constitution gives power to the people, but if this power is to be exercised with wisdom and foresight, it is necessary that the people must have the requisite knowledge. Even from the point of view of increasing the economic and industrial efficiency of the people, it is essential that our educational facilities must be expanded. As a famous economist has said, there are no poor or rich countries but only countries in which the people use their resources and countries in which they do not. Some parts of Africa are among the richest in the world in natural resources and yet because the people are illiterate and ignorant, they are poor and suppressed. There are other parts of the world poor in natural resources, which have been developed and enriched through the knowledge and industry of their people. India will have to decide to which category her people should belong.

## INDIA AND THE WORLD

6 I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this inaugural meeting of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. You will remember that we met last year on the 21st August when we decided to set up a council for the establishment of closer cultural relations between India and her neighbours in the east and west. On that occasion, I described to you how during the war years the Indo-Iranian Cultural Committee had reopened one of the doors that had been shut some centuries ago. I also drew your attention to the need of re-establishing all our old cultural contacts in the context of a free India. In that meeting it was agreed to set up a Provisional Committee to define the aims and objects of the Council and draw up its constitution, and also appoint a small sub-committee to do the necessary work in that behalf.

7 The Provisional Committee met on November 27, 1949, and, after making some notable changes, accepted the draft constitution which had been prepared by the sub-committee. Of these changes, the most important was the removal of all the territorial or geographical limitations on the activities of the Council. The Provisional Committee recommended that the Council should aim at establishing closer contacts between India and all other countries of the world whether in Asia or outside. While we welcome this extension in the scope of the activities of the Council, I think you will agree that it would be more practical to proceed towards that aim step by step. We therefore propose to set up for the present two sections of the Cultural Council, viz., a Middle-East and Turkey Section, and a South and East Asian Section. The Middle-East and Turkey Section has accordingly been set up and will work towards the establishment of closer relations with all the countries of the Middle East, Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Since India and Iran have always had special relations with each other, there will be a special sub-section for the promotion of Indo-Iranian relations. I hope

7/2.45  
/ *Inaugural address at the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi, April 9, 1950*

that within the next year or so, we will be able to set up the South and East Asian Wing of the Council to promote closer contacts with the countries in that region.

You will be glad to hear that our first steps towards the setting up of this Council have met with warm welcome from different foreign/countries. Egypt and Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, Burma and Ceylon and the Republic of Indonesia, have all expressed strong support for the proposal. I hope that now that the Council is established, our cultural relations with these countries will continually expand and we will secure the full co-operation of the universities and other cultural and learned societies of India and these countries for the furtherance of our objects.

I have already referred to the limitation of our resources which compel us to proceed step by step. Nevertheless, action has been initiated and I can report to you some of the things already done :

- (a) The headquarters of the Council have been established at Hyderabad House. In the headquarters, we are building up a library which will provide facilities to scholars for the study of the history and culture of these countries.
- (b) To make a beginning with the library, I have presented to the Council my personal library and I hope that soon these books, which are being despatched from Calcutta, will be available to users here. //
- (c) The Ajit Ghosh collection which has been purchased for the Council possesses many rare and valuable books on Indian art and architecture.
- (d) The reading room is being set up in the headquarters where newspapers, magazines and journals of all these countries will be available as well as the publications of universities and cultural societies.
- (e) We also propose to arrange for periodic meetings where specialists will discuss particular aspects of the culture and civilisation of India and these countries.
- (f) One of the functions of the Council will be the exchange of professors between India and these countries. We have already sent a professor of Sanskrit to Anjuman-e-Iran-Shinasi, Teheran. The Council also arranged for

the lectures of Professor Nafisi, a well-known Iranian scholar, in some of the Indian universities.

- (g) The Council also proposes to publish two Quarterlies, one in Arabic to interpret Indian culture and civilisation to the Middle-East countries, and another in English for the exchange of information and knowledge between India and South and East Asian countries. The first number of the first Quarterly is in press and will soon be available, while preparations for the second Quarterly will be taken in hand at an early date.

I will not, however, go into further details of the programme which will be decided by the executive body that will be set up for the purpose.

I would, before I conclude, like to draw your attention to a practical question which is of some interest for the proper working of the Council. This Council which seeks to create better understanding among peoples of different countries must necessarily concern itself with the language of its transactions. At one time French was the language of international intercourse. Nowadays that position is being gradually taken by English. We will therefore have English as the major language for the transactions of the Council but it is our intention to provide also for French as an alternative medium as soon as possible. At the same time, I hope, that the work of this Council will encourage the study of Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Chinese and other oriental languages which have contributed to the development of human culture and civilisation. //

## PLACE OF ARCHIVES IN HISTORY

We are meeting after a year to discuss our common problems. As you are aware, the Indian Historical Records Commission deals with all kinds of historical records. The scope of our deliberations is therefore wide and extensive. It will, however, be of advantage to confine ourselves to matters of first concern, and I am sure you will agree that these relate to questions affecting the National Archives. In all countries the National Archives are the treasure-houses of their historical wealth, and we in India can justly take pride for the extent and magnitude of our riches in this field.

Our National Archives contain a vast collection of records, but systematic series begin from 1672. Some of the latest records are as late as 1949. They therefore tell the story of nearly 300 years of a most interesting and momentous period of India's history. If what remains of the scattered records of the Moghul period are added to these collections, we can say that our records go back to the 15th century. There are not many countries which can claim records which go so far back. From the point of view of quantity also ours is one of the biggest collections not only in Asia, but in the world. I cannot give you the exact number of our records, for much work of indexing and cataloguing still remains to be done, but to give you some idea of the extent of the collection, I may say that if all these records are assembled in one place, there is no building in India big enough to contain all of them.

It is hardly necessary for me to stress before the present audience the importance of national records. Such records are the basis of history and can alone give authenticity to our knowledge of the past. When we read of the past, we are often troubled by the fact that our knowledge is neither complete nor adequate. Contemporary historians hardly ever leave accounts which satisfy succeeding generations, and in fact, they are often not in a

position to judge what should be recorded and what left out. If, however, complete records are available, the annals of the past can be reconstructed, but, in most cases, such records of the past do not exist. We know that during the Moghul period, India had all the instruments of civilised government and that full records were kept of all official decisions and happenings. Unfortunately, most of these records were destroyed during the troubled period of the 18th century. In consequence, we have lost some of the most valuable sources of our knowledge of the age. It is, however, fortunate that the histories written by Abul Fazl, Abdul Hamid Lahori, Khafi Khan and others, based on official records, are available to us. Even though they were written from an official point of view, their use of records makes them a valuable source material for us. |

During the 19th century, the European States adopted the convention that all State records should be opened to the public after a lapse of 50 years. The records of the Napoleonic era were thus released to the public in about 1870. The Napoleonic era was a period of great progress in different fields, and it was described contemporaneously by many well-known historians. In fact, all the known methods of history writing were used in making the Napoleonic period vivid to the public of the day, but even then, when the official records became available in 1870, it was found that our knowledge of the period was both enriched and altered. Much new light was thrown on obscure incidents and happenings. Many old opinions had to be revised in the light of the new information.

Similarly, the official papers relating to the so-called Indian Mutiny of 1857 were released in 1907. The Government of India published a three-volume history of the Mutiny based on these records. It is true that this book was written from the British point of view, and did not therefore do full justice to the Indian participants. It is therefore necessary that these records should be examined afresh, and a true account of the period written in as objective a manner as possible. Even then the official history which was based on these records revealed many facts that were previously unknown and corrected many of our wrong ideas about the different characters who participated in these momentous happenings.

These two examples show how essential records are for a true

interpretation of history. If, however, the records are to be utilised to the fullest extent, it is necessary that they should not only be preserved, but also arranged and classified systematically. There must also be a sufficient number of scholars with the necessary knowledge and scientific attitude to take full advantage of the information contained in them. In our National Archives, we have an immense store-house of such records but two things have stood in the way of our utilising them fully:

- (1) We have not been able to make arrangements for all the records to be kept in one place.
- (2) We have not been able to appoint the staff necessary for the completion of the work of classification and indexing of the available records.

6 In 1948, I had intended that the Government of India should undertake this task at an early date, and, accordingly, a scheme was drawn up for the improvement of the tempo and the quality of the work. This demanded an increase in the staff of the Archives to cope with the additional work, but, unfortunately, financial stringency prevented the implementation of even this modest scheme.

7 I would like to give the members of the Commission some idea of the magnitude of the task which faces the National Archives today. In 1939, it was little more than a medium-size depository, with a limited body of records. These were, however, fairly well organised though they were not open to students for research. Today, it is one of the leading archival institutions in the world, and is certainly the largest in Asia. It is also mechanically one of the best equipped. Our holdings in the last ten years have greatly grown in bulk, especially since December 1948. It was then decided that all records prior to August 15, 1947, of the Residencies and Political Agencies of the Government of India would be transferred to the National Archives. The increase since then has been almost phenomenal. The number of Residencies and Political Agencies which then went out of commission was 15 and 14 respectively. Of these, the National Archives have already received the records of 14 Residencies and 11 Political Agencies though many of these records have large gaps. These transferred records number 11,555 volumes, and 3,581 bundles, and cover a period from 1672 to 1949 A.D.

71.8  
2 Apart from the sudden accession to our collections, we are



also getting an increasing number of records from different Ministries and their attached and subordinate offices. With growing consciousness, both in the Government and among the people, of the value of records, the destruction of records has now become out of the question. Besides, the increasing function which the Government are undertaking and the necessity of written instruments in a democratic government make it inevitable that the number of records will continue to grow. This will accentuate the problems of space and maintenance of records for each government department, and it is inevitable that offers of transfer of records from the different governmental agencies will continually become more pressing. It is also proposed to legislate in order to ensure complete and regular transfer of all records to the National Archives.

Further problems have been created by the fact that the material which is now coming to the National Archives is often in a chaotic condition. When it was decided to transfer the records of the Residencies and Political Agencies it was also decided to transfer all existing inventories and indexes to these records. This was essential if the National Archives were to check these records, arrange them in their proper order and supply them to the Government or to research scholars on requisition. It is, however, unfortunate that many of the Agencies either did not maintain working lists or indexes of their records, or their records became considerably disarranged during the transfer. As a result, it is difficult to find documents as and when required. These records have therefore to be listed, re-arranged in their original order and properly indexed. Only then can these records tell correctly the story of the transactions of which they are the evidence. Unless restored to their original order, the documents will remain isolated pieces, disconnected, meaningless and unreliable. The phenomenal increase in the production of records in the departments themselves, and their indifferent maintenance in the current and semi-current stages have also added to the difficulties which the Archives have to face. I may cite one example. One series of the Political Department records from 1880 to 1930 which has just been transferred to the Archives does not possess even a check list.

The physical condition of a large bulk of these records also presents a serious problem. Owing to various reasons, many of

these series are in a very bad state of preservation and require immediate rehabilitation in order to ensure their continued existence. To give the members some idea, I may mention that about 3,000 volumes of the Residency records require major and another 4,000 require minor repairs and reconditioning immediately. This task of restoration is very urgent as the climate of New Delhi accelerates the physical deterioration of the records. In order to cope with the situation, the processes of rehabilitation have now been mechanised.

The members of the Commission are also aware that the records have now been thrown open for research. At first, only records up to 1880 were available for inspection, but now all records up to 1901 have been brought under this category. More recent records will also be thrown open in the years to come. In addition, the Archives have undertaken an extensive programme of analysis, indexing, condensing, editing and publication of records in order to facilitate the work of research and reference. The Historical Records Commission has also increased the scope of the work of the Archives as the Records Survey Committees in the different States work directly under the Commission. The interest in the archives and archival work is consequently growing. At the same time, the demand for information from various sources has grown and is still growing.

Thus, on the one hand, we have increasing pressure of work and growing interest on the part of both the Government and the public and, on the other, we know that the prevailing financial stringency will not permit an adequate expansion of the Department in the next few years. In this situation the only way of meeting the shortage of staff is to seek the co-operation of the universities and learned societies. If a sufficient number of scholars take up the task and assist the existing staff in the classification and cataloguing of the material which has been collected, much can be done in spite of the inadequacy of public funds. The universities can also help by allotting the task to post-graduate students of history. If the universities agree to recognise such work as part of the normal training of a post-graduate student, this will not only benefit the students themselves but it will also be a real national service. It is only through the co-operation of professors, lecturers, scholars and research and post-graduate students that the vast material we have can be

utilised properly. I understand that our Director of National Archives had approached the universities once but the response was not satisfactory. I would like to take this occasion, when so many distinguished scholars are present, to press once more that this work of urgent national importance should be undertaken by all the universities and learned societies without further delay. I have every hope that with your co-operation, we can overcome the difficulties created by financial stringency and create conditions in which the Archives can perform their proper function and serve as a treasure-house of information for all students of history.

## LITERATURE AND NATIONALITY

I am glad to welcome you to this first All India Conference on Letters to be held under the auspices of the Central Government. The history of India's achievement in the field of letters extends over millenniums, and is evidence of the innate genius of the people and the encouragement and support extended by enlightened kings and other lovers of letters. These great traditions still remain; but for reasons which are well known, the patronage which in the past was extended to literature by the State has been absent ever since India lost her independence. Now that India is free, it is imperative that we try to make up for the lost ground and create conditions in which our languages can develop their innate potentialities and contribute to the heritage of the world.

I may briefly refer to the proposal which was put forward over five years ago by the Asiatic Society of Bengal for the establishment of a National Cultural Trust. This was to be charged with the task of stimulating and promoting the culture of the country in all its aspects. The Society proposed that the Trust should function as an autonomous body and consist of three Academies, viz., an Academy of Letters to deal with the Indian languages, literature, philosophy and history; an Academy of Arts (including graphic, plastic and applied art) and Architecture, and an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music. It was intended that these Academies should aim at maintaining and improving the standards of achievement in all these fields of culture.

Since literature and culture can flourish best in an atmosphere free from the restrictive influences of officialdom, it was proper for the Asiatic Society to recommend that the Trust should be an independent body, predominantly non-official in its composition, and operate through its own agencies. In order to give greater freedom to the Trust and make it independent of annual grants from the Central or provincial Governments, the Society also proposed that an endowment of four crores of rupees should be

---

*Inaugural address at the First All India Conference on Letters, New Delhi, March 15, 1951*

created. The proposals were referred to the Central Advisory Board of Education which asked one of its committees to examine them. Accordingly it was recommended that the Central Government should contribute half the amount, while the provincial Governments and the Indian States should contribute the balance.

You are all aware that ever since the attainment of independence, the country has been passing through a period of serious stress and difficulty. The aftermath of the partition led to a large-scale uprooting of the population and imposed a severe strain upon the financial resources of the country. World conditions were also such that India had to spend a larger proportion of her revenue on defence than would be necessary in normal times. As a result of these factors, it has not been possible for the Government to bring into existence the Cultural Trust as it had agreed to in principle.

As you know, the financial difficulties still continue and it is not certain when the Government will be in a position to carry out in full its programme in respect of the Trust. Nevertheless, a beginning has been made and an all-India Conference on Art was held in Calcutta in August 1949, as a result of which an Advisory Body on Art was set up. We have decided to hold the Conferences on Letters and on Dance, Drama and Music during the current year so that the advisory bodies for these subjects may also be set up without further delay. It is in pursuance of this decision that we have met today and I am hopeful that your deliberations will help us in the attainment of our objectives.

I am glad to find this array of non-official talent in this assembly, the more so as the importance of non-official initiative in the fields of culture cannot be over-emphasised. If you look at the agenda, you will find that the first item for your consideration is a proposal for the establishment of an Indian Academy of Letters which will co-ordinate literary activities in all the Indian languages. 'Co-ordinate' is perhaps an unfortunate word, because all literary creation is an expression of the freedom of the spirit and does not lend itself to control or organisation. What, however, an Academy can do is to consider ways and means for the preparation and maintenance of an over-all survey of literature in all the Indian languages so that, through greater knowledge of one another's efforts, literary men and women in

all the languages can be spurred to greater activity and help in the creation of a literature which is comparable to that of the advanced languages of the world.

So long as there was an alien Government in the country, the people were suspicious of any governmental interference in the sphere of literature and culture. This was natural, for the people feared that such interference would have political implications. Today, with the establishment of a National Government, there need be no such political fears, and some people, in fact, expect the Government to be entirely responsible for the development of our languages. I would, however, like to state that even a National Government cannot, and should not be, expected to develop literature and culture through official fiat. The Government should certainly help both by material assistance and by creating an atmosphere which is congenial to cultural activities, but the main work of the development of literature and culture must be the responsibility of individuals endowed with talent and genius. The scope of non-official activity in these fields is unlimited and can never be over-emphasised.

Throughout the British period, except in a few relatively unimportant areas, no Indian language has enjoyed the status of a State language, nor has any of these languages been used as a medium of instruction in the universities and other higher institutions of learning. Consequently, whatever developments there have been, have been due to their internal strength. The situation has, however, completely changed with the attainment of freedom. An Indian language has attained the status of the national language, and other Indian languages enjoy the status of State languages in their own areas. The Indian languages are also being increasingly used in higher education, and in the course of the next 15 years or so, they will completely replace English as the medium of instruction at all stages of education. The support of the State and use in the universities are factors which help in the growth of a language, and there is no doubt that the Indian languages which have until now developed without any extraneous aids, will now begin a new phase of development.

I have already said that one of the first duties of an Academy of Letters would be to survey and investigate the literature which now exists in all the Indian languages. This is necessary so that

we may know exactly what has been achieved in the Indian languages, and what remains to be done. It is obvious that if any language is to attain recognition outside its own domain, it must contain works which are accepted as valuable contributions to human knowledge or culture. For this, it is not enough if a language translates works from other languages. Valuable as such translations are, and greatly as they contribute to the development of a language, they cannot by themselves establish a language as a world language. A language or literature attains that status only when it makes some contribution which by its originality or depth of insight or beauty of expression marks an addition to the achievements of man.

The fourteen languages recognised by the Constitution include Sanskrit and Tamil. Sanskrit is, of course, in a class by itself, and is rightly recognised as one of the most developed of classical languages. Tamil also has a rich and ancient literature and its poetry has been and deserves to be translated into foreign languages. We must, however, remember that Tamil is really a classical language, and most of the achievements of Tamil which entitle it to recognition belong to a past age.

If therefore we leave out Sanskrit and Tamil as classical languages, we must face up to the painful fact that only Bengali and Urdu among the modern Indian languages can claim to some extent international recognition. Urdu, in less than three hundred years, has achieved a progress that is almost phenomenal. Urdu poetry developed suddenly and produced poets who can rank with the immortal poets of the classical languages. Mir Anis can take his place after poets like Valmiki, Homer and Firdausi ; Sauda, Mir and Ghalib have composed lyrics that are excellent, judged by any standard. Ghalib, in particular, has reached heights of originality and beauty that rank him with the greatest lyric poets of the world. In prose too, Urdu has, in about a hundred years, produced works in history and literature that have rightly attained international fame. Among the Indian languages, it is only from Urdu that some works had been translated into English and other European languages more than a hundred years ago. Garcin de Tassy published a French translation of Sir Syed Ahmad's *Asar-al-Sanadid* as early as 1850. Maulvi Nazir Ahmed and Maulana Shibli Numani have also produced works which have been translated and quoted by well-known

European scholars. In the third volume of his *Literary History of Persia*, Edward Browne has drawn extensively upon the works of Shibli Numani. In fact, a large portion of this book, particularly the Chapter on Hafiz, is almost a translation of Shibli Numani's *Shair-al-Ajam*. Browne has expressed his regret that Shibli Numani's book did not appear ten years earlier, for in that case his first two volumes of *Literary History of Persia* would have benefited by the incorporation of his material and interpretation. It is not only Shibli Numani's work which has attained this status. There are other authors too whose books have been translated into Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Russian and German.

Besides Urdu, the only other modern Indian language which has attained international status is Bengali. This is due almost entirely to the genius of Rabindranath Tagore. There is perhaps no language today which has not translated some of the works of Tagore. His name is rightly recognised as among the immortals and on account of him Bengali has an honoured place among the literatures of the world. Similarly, some of Sarat Chandra Chatterji's novels have also been translated into some European languages.

If we exclude Sanskrit and Tamil as classical languages, and leave out Urdu and Bengali, it is a regrettable fact that none of the other modern Indian languages have yet attained world status or made any contribution to the literature of the world. It is true that Gujarati has one work which has attained international importance, viz., the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi. Similarly, Tilak's *Geeta Rahasya* in Marathi has also rightly won the appreciation of scholars throughout the world. But we cannot class a language as a world language on the strength of only one or two books.

I am sure that all the literary figures who have assembled here today will agree with me that we have to pay special attention to the question of Hindi. We have accepted it as our national language, and the Constitution provides that it must take the place of English in 15 years. It is therefore essential that Hindi should develop sufficient strength and wealth to fulfil this important role, and yet we have to admit with sorrow that Hindi has not yet developed a literature which has achieved international standards or recognition. I would like to remove one misunder-



standing in this connection. What is called Hindi today must be distinguished from Brij Bhasha and Avadhi. It was in Brij Bhasha and Avadhi that during the 16th and 17th century great progress was made under Moghul patronage. From the time of Akbar to that of Shah Alam, there was always a Poet Laureate in Brij Bhasha at the Moghul Court. It was during Jehangir's reign that Tulsidas wrote his famous work in Avadhi. Brij Bhasha and Avadhi, between them, threw up a galaxy of talents of which some of the most distinguished names are those of Tulsidas, Amir Khusroe, Malik Mohammad Jaisi, Abdul Rahim Khan Khanan, Mirabai, Kabir, Dadu, Ramdas, Shah Barkat Ullah and Abul Jalil Bilgrami.

The poetry of Brij Bhasha attained a high degree of excellence and can rightfully claim a place among the literatures of the world. This, however, is quite distinct from what is called Hindi today. Modern Hindi started as a literary language in the beginning of the 20th century and was in fact only a variation of the same language of which the other variation is Urdu. The only difference between the two is that Hindi is more Sanskritic in vocabulary. There is no doubt that a great quantity of literature has been produced in Hindi since the beginning of this century. Many magazines and newspapers have been and continue to be published. Hindi can also boast of translations from almost all the Indian languages as well as from some of the languages of Europe. While therefore the quantity of literature produced in Hindi is extensive, the quality is not yet of a degree which can entitle Hindi to a place in world literature. This is a matter which is of anxious concern to all of us, for a language which we have chosen to be our national language must attain a status commensurate with that dignity. As nationals of India, it is therefore our duty to try to enrich the literature of Hindi and see that really first-rate literature is produced in it.

I have mentioned earlier that apart from Sanskrit, Tamil, Bengali and Urdu, there are some important works in languages like Gujarati and Marathi, and one may add Telugu. It is, however, necessary that all these languages must develop rich literatures of their own so that the contribution of India to world literature may correspond to her past attainments.

I would like to draw your attention to one other problem which the present Conference should consider. Though Hindi

has been accepted as the national language of India, we have to recognise that it is not the mother tongue of people from the South, the East and the West. Till these areas take up the study of Hindi on an adequate scale and their people acquire facility in the use of Hindi, the problem of our national language is not really solved. We must, however, be very careful as to how we proceed in the matter. We must respect the susceptibilities of our brethren from South, West and East India. They should never feel that they are being compelled to accept something against their will. We are grateful to them that they have accepted Hindi as the national language and we must work for the spread and development of Hindi with their willing co-operation. It was in order to tide over the difficulties of the transitory period that it was decided to have an interval of 15 years during which the use of English should continue. That decision should not be lightly changed and we must be careful to avoid doing anything which may create an impression among our brethren from these areas that it is proposed to change that decision without their consent. I would, however, at the same time, appeal to them to remember that if we are to succeed in implementing our decision to substitute English by Hindi after 15 years, the necessary preparation for the change must begin now. I have every confidence that we will receive the co-operation of all Indians—whether they come from the East or West, the North or South—in the proper development of Hindi as our national language.

I would conclude by saying that the question of the national language is not the concern of any particular section or group. It is a matter which vitally affects the whole country. I consider it an accident that the language which was chosen to be the national language was from North India. Under a different set of circumstances, it might have been a language of the South. Since, however, the choice has been made, it is the national duty of all Indians—whether of the South or of the North—to do everything for the development and enrichment of Hindi. I am confident that, with the full co-operation of the North and South, East and West, Hindi will soon develop a literature which will enable it to claim its place among the rich literatures of the world.

## UNESCO AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

On behalf of the Indian National Commission and myself, I extend a very cordial welcome to Dr. Jaime Torres Bodet, Director General of Unesco, on the occasion of his first official visit to India. The welcome is the greater as we have been expecting him since last year, and the disappointment felt at his inability to fulfil his engagement then has accentuated our pleasure in finding him in our midst today.

We welcome Dr. Bodet not only because he is the Director General of Unesco, but also because of the personal contribution he has made, both before and since he assumed that office, towards the furtherance of peace through education. His work in rural adult education in Mexico won the appreciation of discerning critics all over the world. Ever since he assumed office as Director General, he has given a new impetus to the programme of Fundamental Education and the service of under-developed areas. I have every hope that his present tour of India, Ceylon and Pakistan will establish closer bonds between Unesco and these countries and lead to greater efforts in the cause of education for peace and unity.

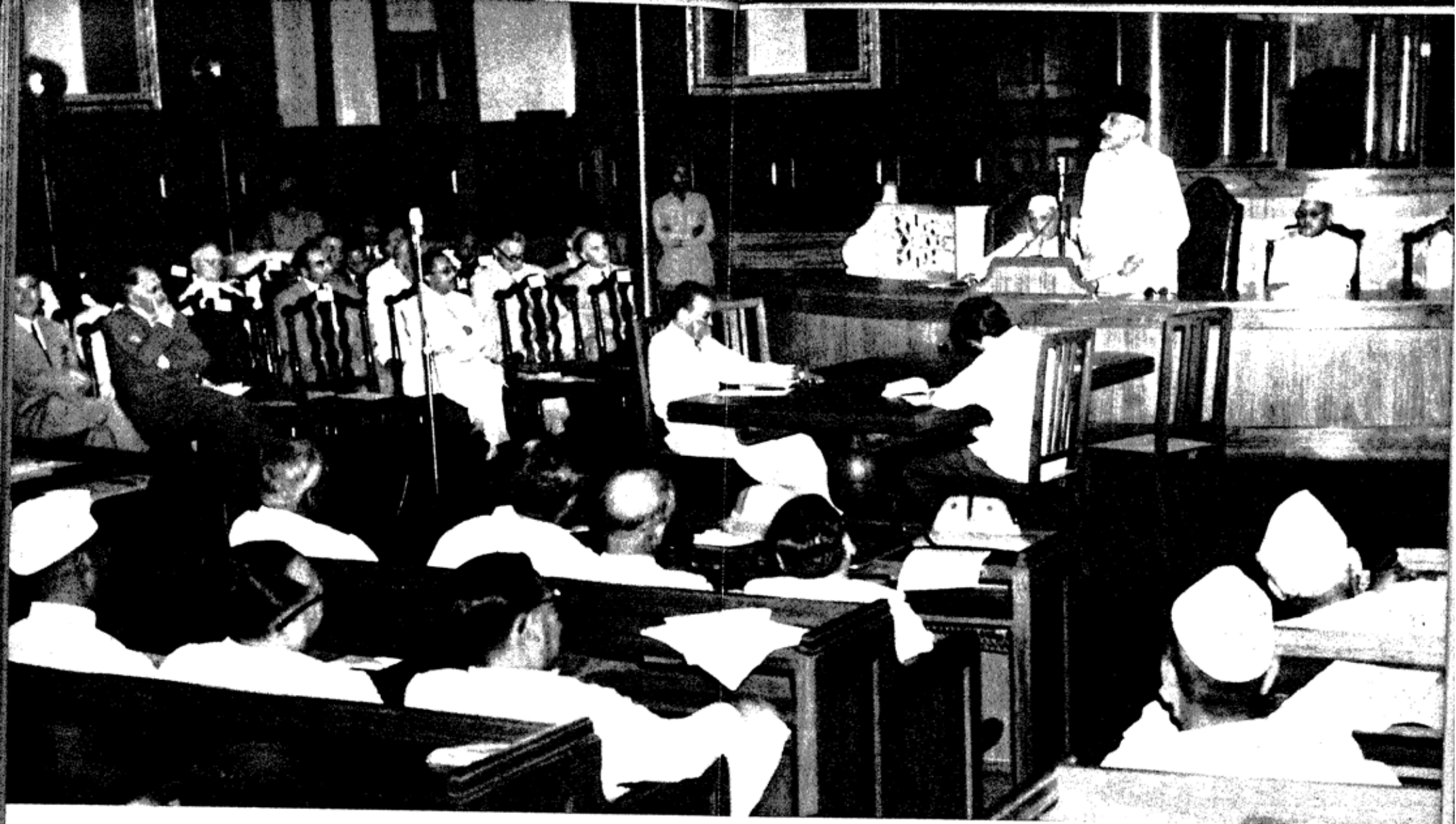
Unesco is one of the specialised agencies of Uno which was established to achieve international unity and peace. We must, however, confess that world unity on the political plane is still a distant goal. The world organisations which have been set up to achieve political unity, whether as the League of Nations or the United Nations Organisation, have not yet achieved anything that can rekindle the hopes of men. Uno, founded to solve all political problems in a spirit of equity by remaining free from entanglement with power blocks, is unfortunately itself becoming a victim of power politics. The conflicts between nations that formerly marked the field of diplomacy are now often displayed in the deliberations of Uno. How can we then hope that Uno will succeed in its aims unless it can disentangle itself from the

---

*Speech of Welcome at the Second Session of the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco, New Delhi, March 24, 1951*



*Delivering the Presidential Address at the inaugural session of the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco, April, 1949*



*Delivering the Presidential Address at the Conference of the  
Indian Council of Cultural Relations, New Delhi, April 1950*



*Inaugurating the first All India Conference  
on Letters, New Delhi, March 1951*

trammels of political groupings and judge all questions from the point of view of international justice and peace? While aware of the present shortcomings, India is nevertheless a staunch supporter of Uno, for world peace is so precious an objective that we cannot give up any instrument which offers even a remote hope of achieving it. And what instrument of world peace can there be other than Uno? Like the Persian poet Urfi, I feel like saying:

*Zi Naqs-i-Tashna-Labee Dan Ba Aql-i-Khesh Manaz  
Dilat Fareb Gar Az Jalwa-i-Surab Na-Khurd.*

'You need not take pride in your acumen if you look at the sands of Sahara and are not beguiled by the mirage of water;

For if you had been indeed thirsty, you would have seen the sand as water.'

If then the hopes of peace held out by Uno prove in the end to be illusory, the illusion is itself so dear to us that we would fain cherish it.

If therefore in this troubled world we can find any gleam of hope for unity and peace, it can be only through the activity of Unesco. Unesco rightly recognises that all conflicts originate in the mind of man, and hence it is in the minds of men that the bastions of peace must be built. The emphasis here is on the cultural unity of mankind to which different countries and different peoples have made their contribution. In Unesco one may therefore forget the clashes of Lake Success and live in an atmosphere where representatives who oppose one another in Uno can co-operate in creative effort. I may cite as an instance the political differences which have divided our country from South Africa. India has rightly sought the help of Uno to remove discrimination and racial inequality that prevail in South Africa, but in Unesco we find that the representatives of South Africa co-operate with the representatives of India in advancing the cause of education, science and culture. Education is basic to the creation of an atmosphere in which human beings can meet one another on a plane of friendship and equality, and we are particularly happy that the direction of Unesco is today in the hands of one who has identified himself with the furtherance of these ends.

Mr. Director General, you will perhaps agree with me that

men and women of the present generation have been brought up in an atmosphere of such national exclusiveness that they cannot be expected to achieve world unity and world citizenship easily. They have been trained to think on lines which make it difficult to transcend the limitations of race, class or nationality. If therefore we are to achieve world unity, and all agree that without such unity the future of man is dark, all our efforts must be concentrated to educate the future generations for world citizenship. If from their earliest days, the children of today are trained to think of one another in terms of unity and brotherhood, they will, when they grow up, develop an attitude of mind in which the present conflicts will become unnecessary and unreal.

I also hope, Mr. Director General, that you will agree with me that for achieving this end the entire method of teaching history and geography in schools must be changed. Till this has been done, there can be no hope of achieving a real unity of purpose among the peoples of the world and without such unity there can be no world citizenship. The way in which we teach history and geography today not only militates against this objective but is, in a way, not even founded on fact. This terrestrial globe which nature has created as one has been divided by us for our purposes into different compartments. Not content with this, we have painted the common world in different colours in order to ensure that these divisions are maintained and demarcated them as Asia and Europe, America and Africa. When we teach a child geography, we do not start by saying that he is an inhabitant of the earth, but on the contrary we start by instilling in his mind that he is from Delhi, and Delhi is in India, and India is in Asia, and Asia is in the Eastern Hemisphere. It is only after all these stages have been passed that we at last tell him that he is a denizen of the world. Is it surprising that a child brought up in this way thinks of himself as belonging to the particular spot where he has been born, be it Delhi or Paris, Peking or New York? At most he can transcend his provincial and national borders and feel himself an Asian or a European, an African or an American, but the idea of his membership of the human species remains a mere abstraction.

I am sure, Mr. Director General, you will agree that this method of teaching geography must be changed. We must have new maps for children in the elementary stages in which the



world will be painted in one colour ; we must teach the child that he is a denizen of the world first and foremost, and then go on to tell him that just as a town is divided into different wards for purposes of convenience, but nevertheless the town remains one, so the world is divided into segments like Asia and America, Africa and Europe, but such divisions do not disrupt the unity of the world. Just as the ward is again divided into smaller sections and streets, the continents are divided into smaller units and we call them countries, but these countries remain integral parts of the same world. I have no doubt that geography taught in this way will, from their very childhood, establish in the minds of children a sense of belonging to One World.

Like mistaught geography, history mistaught has also become an instrument for the division of mankind. In our current history books, we are told that men belong to different races and nations. The story of these nations emphasises their internecine conflicts so that the relation between men from different groups is represented as one of hatred and discord. It is inevitable that history so taught must lead to a constriction of the mind, a narrowing of the vision in which the child's identity with his group depends upon its sharp demarcation from all other groups. I sometimes think that it was better when men and women believed implicitly in the story of the Bible, and thought that whatever be the differences between nations and races, they were all the children of Adam and Eve. This concept of common parentage served as a bond of unity in the midst of our many differences and conflicts. In the 19th century, as our knowledge increased, we started questioning these religious legends. Instead of derivation from common parents, we started to divide mankind into Caucasians and Mongolians, into Aryans and Semetics, and into further sub-divisions within each larger division. I do not know if the story of Adam and Eve is literally true or a Hebrew version of the Chaldean myth, but I have no doubt that it is in essence true : it is a recognition of the fundamental truth that the human race is one in origin and hence all men are akin to one another. Such recognition is not to my mind incompatible with belief in the theory of evolution. One can accept that theory and still hold that all men belong to the same species and differences among them developed on account of differences in environment and other factors. Just as the teaching of geography must be recast

to bring out the unity of the world, we must recast the teaching of history to bring out the unity of man.

I would like to refer to the so-called opposition between East and West, or between different races and cultures. Most accounts of such conflicts seem in any case to be based on a misunderstanding of facts. We are told that centuries before the Christian era, the Persian attack on Greece was an attack of the East on the West, and led to a counter-attack by the West led by Alexander. Are these however conflicts between East and West, or campaigns of conquest by individuals who wanted to bring the whole of the known world under their sway? It seems to me that we have thus created needlessly a myth of conflict between East and West extending over millenniums. It seems obvious to me that till we recast the teaching of history and geography, we cannot hope to change the attitude of man. I know that this is no easy task, for even with such reform of the teaching of history and geography, many obstacles will remain. Perhaps the greatest of these obstacles is the cult of narrow nationalism. It is strange that nationalism which developed as a defence against the autocracy of kings has itself become aggressive today. A force for liberation and liberalism in the 19th century, it has today become an instrument for holding back the progress of man. So intense and pervasive has become its influence that however clearly we recognise the need of world unity and however keenly we desire it, we cannot yet transcend the limitations of nationalism. And yet unless we can go beyond nationalism, the future of man is dark.

Mr. Director General, I am glad to hear that Unesco has already taken steps for reform in the methods of teaching history and geography. I was glad to learn that seminars have been held for the purpose and what is more important, Unesco is undertaking to produce a history of mankind which will emphasise the growth of world unity. I have every hope that this aspiration of Unesco will be translated into reality during your regime, and I can assure you that India, which is one of the founder members of Unesco, will extend all possible help and co-operation towards the furtherance of that end.

I have now great pleasure in requesting the Prime Minister to inaugurate this session of the Indian National Commission.

## THE ROLE OF UNESCO

120  
Though this is the first occasion on which I have, in person, attended a session of Unesco, I may claim that in spirit I have always been with you and followed your deliberations and activities with the keenest interest and sympathy. This I have done as I feel that, in view of the disaster which threatens the future of mankind, Unesco alone offers a faint ray of hope. Mankind has, in the course of the last century, made phenomenal advances in knowledge and material prosperity but this progress has not been reflected in man's moral and political achievement. Increased knowledge has therefore led not only to a greater provision for comforts and victory over want and disease, but also, alas, to an increase in man's power for destruction and death. This power is so great today that, unless all men have a sense of community, it may well lead to common ruin for all. It is only through a re-education of man that we can create that sense of psychological unity and common citizenship which the technological unity achieved by the advance of modern science requires of man.

This is the reason why, in 1949, when the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco was founded, I placed such great emphasis on the importance of Unesco's work. I pointed out with regret that while the United Nations were founded for the achievement of peace and unity, the result had, in fact, been the division of the world into two warring camps. It is true that some progress has been achieved and, in place of a multitude of nations, each struggling on its own, the United Nations present a picture of two solid blocks arrayed one against the other. Nevertheless, to any man who looks forward to co-operation and friendship among nations, this picture can bring no message of hope. It seems that the only hope lies in Unesco, which seeks to achieve unity in the field of education, science and culture, even among those who are politically divided. I feel that if Unesco could achieve its objectives and create understanding between different nations on the cultural

plane, there is hope that, with time, the cultural understanding would make itself felt in the economic and political fields also.

In the course of the last two years, my hope in Unesco and my apprehensions about the United Nations have both increased. The political situation has steadily deteriorated and today the United Nations instead of being an instrument for the achievement of peace, tend to become a platform on which great powers struggle for conflicting aims. If therefore any hope is left, it is in Unesco, for it is only through intellectual understanding and sympathy that we may yet avert the disaster which otherwise threatens to engulf the whole of humanity.

It is true that Unesco is barely half a dozen years old. But these few years have been of immense significance for the future of man. This period has revealed fissures in our political and intellectual attitudes which, unless they are checked in time, may well involve the whole of humanity in one common ruin. It is therefore necessary that we should attempt to evaluate what Unesco has done during these critical years and survey its past achievement so that we can map out with greater confidence the course of its future action.

The aim of Unesco is to bring nations together through education, science and culture. Ever since its foundation, Unesco has yearly passed resolutions and adopted programmes to achieve that end. One of the greatest achievements of Unesco has been to help frame a new and universal declaration of human rights which has since been adopted by the United Nations. Similarly, in the field of technical assistance to underdeveloped countries and the restoration of educational and cultural facilities in the war-devastated countries, and in the exchange of persons and ideas between different nations, considerable progress has been achieved. Even more important is the project which Unesco seeks to adopt for the provision of fundamental education to immense areas of the world as yet without adequate facilities. It is a sad reflection on our civilisation that almost three-quarters of the adult population of the world are still unlettered. Illiteracy and ignorance directly contradict all our professions for the rights of men and constitute a threat to universal democracy, peace and progress. I should like to congratulate Unesco upon its realisation that it is only by improving the human material

through education in the less fortunate areas of the world that prospects of world peace can be secured.

While no one can for a moment question the programme of Unesco in these fields, I feel sure that you, Mr. President, and you, Mr. Director General, will agree with me that Unesco cannot succeed in its objectives so long as the fear of war and destruction cripple the creative energies of man. Unless this threat can be averted, all our efforts to advance education, science and culture seem a mockery. If the world is to be saved from disaster, we must, as intelligent men and women, decide what steps Unesco can take to avoid the threat of war. It will not do to say that the questions of war and peace are primarily political and do not concern Unesco which is a body devoted to the advancement of education, science and culture. What meaning can there be in these activities if the very basis of man's existence is threatened? Unesco has accepted its responsibilities in the matter by embodying in its constitution the recognition that since all wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.

It is right and proper for Unesco to think of the education of the future generations, but unless we take steps to avert the danger which threatens us here and now, the future generations may not be in a position to enjoy the fruits of its activities. To my mind it seems that the time has come when Unesco must decide whether it will reflect the political divisions which exist in the United Nations or develop into an instrument where men and women of knowledge, understanding and goodwill will meet together, irrespective of political differences. We in Unesco have therefore to make up our minds whether the political limitations which restrict the activities of the United Nations must necessarily be binding on us as well. Unfortunately, the United Nations have not succeeded in bringing nations closer together on the political plane, but must we not therefore make greater efforts to ensure that in the field of education, science and culture nations draw nearer one another? To me it seems that whatever may be the differences in the political field, Unesco must not shut its doors to any country. In fact, it should go forward and knock at doors now closed to it. Unesco should not wait for any State or country to apply for membership but should itself extend a warm and standing invitation to all countries not

yet its members. It is common human experience that friendship begets friendship and distrust, distrust. I have every reason to think that once Unesco offers its help and assistance to all countries, irrespective of political differences, it may well provide a platform where dissident nations may work together and through common endeavour dispel suspicion, mistrust and discord.

There has been a new and universal declaration of human rights, but, Mr. President, I am sure you will agree that a mere declaration is not enough. I hope I will not be misunderstood if I place before you and the representatives of different nations assembled here today as clearly and unequivocally as I can the feeling of the Indian people on this question. I do so the more readily as I am sure they are shared by all peoples in Eastern countries. They feel that in spite of the theoretical recognition of the equality of man, a section of people in the West is still not free from prejudices arising out of differences of colour and race. We, in the East, welcome the formulation of the principle of human equality but seek to know what Unesco is doing for the early attainment of these declared objectives. I am aware that the Director General has expressed the hope that, through fundamental education, these ideals will one day be attained, but people in the East, while they welcome it as a long-term programme, at the same time ask what Unesco is doing to realise this ideal in the immediate future.

Unesco, I feel, should give a lead to the world in understanding the great change which has come over Asia in the course of the half century or more. After age-long slumber, Asia is again awake and her awakening is symbolic of the awakening of all the East. For 200 years or more, the leadership in thought and achievement has rested with Europe, and the Europeans have perhaps not unnaturally come to look upon themselves as the natural leaders of man. Today Asia remembers that long before Europe achieved its greatness she had brought messages of hope and salvation to the whole of mankind. Today, she remembers her past traditions and is rightfully impatient of any suggestion of superiority or patronage from any quarter of the globe. Unless Unesco is sensitive to this feeling and understands fully the change which has come over the East, Unesco's work in Asia and Africa cannot be fully effective. Yet it seems to me that even in Unesco there is an imperfect apprecia-

tion of this tremendous awakening of the East. I will give you only two examples. In the exhibition on human rights which was organised by Unesco, the emphasis was overwhelmingly on the achievements and concepts of the West, but can any one deny that the East has made valuable contributions to the conception of human dignity, equality and emancipation? Coming nearer home, in the set-up of Unesco itself, I am somewhat surprised to find that Asia and Africa, which together constitute perhaps two-thirds of the total population of the world, do not have even ten per cent of the posts among the higher executives. I am not one of those who think that appointments should go according to race, colour or nationality, but at the same time I would be failing in my duty if I did not point out that this gross under-representation of Asians and Africans in the more responsible offices of Unesco tends to create in the minds of Eastern peoples a feeling that Unesco does not fully recognise their claims, even though they base their claims on grounds of merit alone. 7

I should now like to refer briefly to a few important aspects of the programme presented to us. I have already said that we welcome the programme of technical assistance but I should like Unesco to remember that these programmes should be decided according to the wishes not of the donors but of the recipients. I should also like to point out that conditions differ from country to country and help which may be welcome and beneficial to one country may not fulfil the requirements of another. The forms of assistance must also vary, for some countries may require assistance in personnel while others may be more in need of equipment. The time has now come when we must survey once again the principles on which the programme of technical assistance is based and modify these to suit the requirements of countries at different stages of development. 7.2

I also welcome and, in fact, wish to congratulate Unesco upon its move to revise and improve the teachings of history and geography in schools and colleges. For over thirty years I have held that there can be no peace for the world until we reform the methods of teaching history and geography in schools. At present, we teach young people in a way which emphasises their differences and conflicts. History is full of national glorification and at times national vainglory. Geography, instead of teaching the unity of the world, emphasises divisions. Not

content with drawing boundaries which artificially divide the world, we paint each country in a different colour, so that from the very infancy the child learns to think of himself as different from his fellows in other parts of the globe. How can we hope to have better understanding between nations unless the younger generation is trained to think in terms of world unity and citizenship? I am glad that Unesco is not only undertaking the preparation of a history of civilisation which will emphasise the unity of men but is also undertaking a revision of history and geography teaching by organising specialised studies in seminars.

There is another point on which I should like to touch before I conclude. I fully appreciate Unesco's desire to cover as wide a field as possible. I also understand and sympathise with member states who want special attention to be paid to their special problems. We have, however, to decide whether the best results can be achieved by taking up a large number of projects that cannot be fully carried out or by adopting a fundamental programme and carrying it out with all our energy and devotion. I am aware that the Director General is thinking along the same lines and has been trying to reduce the number of programme resolutions, but may I urge that he has not gone far enough and that we should help him to cut down programme resolutions even more and see that there is no waste of time, energy and manpower on schemes which are not fundamental? I am sure you will all agree that there is room for drastic reduction in the number of papers, documents, committees and conferences which confront us every year. May I, for a moment, take you into my confidence, and say that the number of papers I have received for this conference alone are far more than I hope to study and I have half a suspicion that most delegates share my feelings?

Mr. President, I have done, but before concluding I would stress once again that the time has come for Unesco to give a bold lead to the world for the creation of better understanding in the fields of education, science and culture without regard to political and economic differences, in the hope that once a unity of purpose is achieved in the intellectual field, unity will follow in the other fields as well. I am sure you will all share that hope and faith, for it is only through such unity that we can save mankind from disaster and ruin.



## EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

It is for me a great pleasure to associate myself with the formal opening of the Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur.

When I assumed charge of the Ministry of Education in 1947, I felt that of the many tasks of educational reconstruction that faced the country, two were of paramount urgency. The first was the creation of a nation-wide system of Basic Education for all children of school-going age, and the second the provision of facilities of the highest type of education in the technical field. You are aware that the prevailing system of education in the country has been mainly literary and academic. It has not supplied us with the high level scientific and technical personnel that is necessary to develop our economic and material resources, and improve the standard of life of our peoples. For such education we have had to send our students abroad, and from various points of view this has never been and cannot be fully satisfactory. 7

One of the first decisions I took on assuming charge was that we must so improve the facilities for higher technical education in the country, that we could ourselves meet most of our needs. The large number of our young men who had been going abroad for higher training could have received such training in the country itself. Indeed, I looked and still look forward to the day when the facilities for technical education in India will be of such a level that people from abroad will come to India for higher scientific and technical training. 2

The Government of India had already before them a scheme for the establishment of four institutions of the standard of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I felt that whatever the financial and other obstacles, we must go ahead with the implementation of that scheme. The first item in that programme was the establishment of the Eastern Institute near Calcutta, and I am happy that in spite of the tremendous difficulties we have had to face in the last four years, we are able to participate in the opening of the Institute today. I would here like to place

3 on record my deep appreciation of the generous help we have received from the Government of West Bengal who have given to the Institute, free of cost, a magnificent plot of some 1200 acres, and this fine building.

4 It has been clear to me from the very beginning that this Institute must provide instruction of the highest standard, under the supervision of recognised authorities in their respective fields. We have intended that only men of the highest quality should be in charge of the different departments, and we have not hesitated even to go outside India to recruit professors wherever necessary. We have also felt that there is no point in providing specialised courses merely because such courses exist elsewhere, but those courses should be provided only if a clear need for their provision is felt. We have therefore decided that facilities in different subjects will be made available at the Institute only when we are satisfied that :

- (a) properly qualified and experienced personnel has been secured to run the course, and
- (b) that the industrial and technical development of the country need the provision of such a course.

5 As I have said earlier, these higher technical institutes are intended to fill important gaps in the provision of facilities for higher technical education. Pending the establishment of such institutes, we have sought to fill some of these gaps by improving the facilities available in the existing institutions. On the recommendation of the All India Council for Technical Education, a scheme for the strengthening and improvement of fourteen engineering and technological institutions situated in different parts of the country has been sanctioned and is now in the third year of its operation. This scheme will cost approximately Rs. 1.5 crore. The Government have also sanctioned large amounts for the development of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. Now that the Indian Institute of Technology has been established, fresh encouragement will be given to the improvement of technical education throughout the country. The Institute will provide post-graduate and research facilities which can be utilised properly only if a sufficient number of graduates in engineering and technology of a sufficiently high quality are forthcoming to take advantage of the facilities offered. This aspect of the question is constantly in our minds and I can assure

6

you that the Government will continue to take a deep interest in the all-round development of facilities of technical education throughout the country.

The Institute which is being inaugurated today will have provision for the teaching of 2,000 students at the under-graduate level, and 1,000 students for post-graduate study and research. These students will be drawn from all over the country, and their close association in a fellowship of study and research in some of the most formative years of their life will, we earnestly hope, develop in them a consciousness of their common Indian nationality and culture. The Institute's main function is, no doubt, to provide facilities for training high-grade engineers and technologists, but this function, you will appreciate, cannot be adequately performed without the provision of facilities for research as well. We are beginning today with only a little over two hundred under-graduates and a few research students, but I can clearly visualise the day when the great potentialities of this Institute will be fully realised.

120 // In order to ensure that the Institute serves the needs of the country in the most effective manner, the courses in the Institute will be planned on the advice of experts drawn from industry, government departments, other employing agencies and educational authorities. In fact, this close association between academic experts and practical administrators is essential for the proper development of an institution of this type. I would like to make a special appeal to our industrial and business magnates to take an active interest in the development of this Institute. They can help in many ways. Industry can assist financially by establishing Chairs in subjects in which it is especially interested. Such assistance would make it possible to have professors, where necessary, more than one, in subjects which are important from the point of view of the development of industry. I have no doubt that industrialists will also help to make the training in this Institute more practical and concrete by permitting students to visit workshops and factories and allowing them to go through organised courses of practical training in the industry. It will improve the quality of teaching in the Institute, and in the end help the industrialists themselves, if staff members of the Institute are offered facilities for the study of industrial techniques. Promising employees should also be seconded to the Institute to undertake

programmes of research or courses at the post-graduate level. Last but not the least, industrial magnates can help by deputing engineers, technologists, and administrators in their concerns to deliver lectures or courses of lectures at the Institute.

Though situated in one corner of India, this Institute is intended to cater for the needs of the country as a whole. We have been able to recruit very distinguished men to take charge as professors in the different departments, and we are happy that a scientist of the calibre of Dr. J. C. Ghosh is its first Director. I have no doubt that they will devote themselves to building this institution on sound foundations so that it may take its place among the finest institutions of its kind not only in India but in the world.

Before I conclude, I must refer to the services of the late Sir Ardshir Dalal, who as the Member for Planning and Development of the then Government of India, mooted the idea of this Institute and Sri Nalini Ranjan Sarkar who was the Chairman of the Committee that drew up the first plan for its establishment. ) 3/2 m.

## TAGORE AND INDIAN EDUCATION

124 As I stand here today, my thoughts go back to the memory of Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore who some fifty years ago started this institution to provide a meeting place for the culture of the East and the West. It was from its inception a unique educational experiment; for, while it sought to preserve all that was of value in our ancient heritage, it was modern in spirit and welcomed the contributions which the West has made to the development of the human spirit. It was this combination of the past and the present which distinguished Santiniketan.

① There were, no doubt, some Indian institutions which sought to preserve our traditional values, but since they shut their doors against the influence of the modern age, they were mere relics of the past than institutions with a living message. On the other hand, the Government of the day founded an educational system which was intended primarily to train people for employment under the Government. Its main object was not the dissemination of culture, and even when it did so it was the culture of the West. There was hardly any educational institution which fully appreciated Indian culture and civilisation, while at the same time recognising the need for changes in the light of changed circumstances. It was Gurudev's achievement that he, almost single-handed, filled this void. A great admirer of the Western culture and science, he was at the same time conscious of the values of our ancient heritage. He held that neither must the West drive out the East, nor the East resist the beneficial influences coming from the West.

2 The thing which has always struck me about Gurudev was his lofty humanism which arose above all sectarian and communal limitations. Born in one of the pioneer Brahmo families of Bengal, he developed quite early in life an outlook in which the whole world became to him a home and he felt a close affiliation with all humanity. This sense of kinship with the whole world is the essence of Indian culture, and perhaps its greatest

*Address at the formal inauguration of the Visva-Bharati as a Central University, Santiniketan, September 22, 1951*

contribution to the world. The development of such a spirit in Gurudev was encouraged by the atmosphere of his family in which the influence of Sufi poetry mingled with the humanitarianism of the nineteenth century England and above all there reigned the spirit of the truths of the Upanishads. It was this consciousness of the fundamental spiritual unity of man that led Gurudev to found the Visva-Bharati where the world could unite in common brotherhood and realise the ideals of peace, goodness and unity.

You are all aware that in the Visva-Bharati Act we have included a quotation from the objects of Visva-Bharati as defined by Gurudev. I may tell you that some of my colleagues did not consider the inclusion of this necessary and it was not therefore included in the draft Bill as presented to Parliament. I, however, found that there was a strong feeling in Parliament for its inclusion in the Act and accordingly it was decided to do so with the exception of the last phrase in the objectives as defined by Gurudev. I do not wish to tell you what my personal opinion was. In a matter like this, the Cabinet is jointly responsible, and therefore we are all party to the decision which was finally taken. I may, however, tell you that those who favoured the leaving out of this passage did not do so because of any doubt about the noble idea expressed therein, but only because they felt that a reference to God is out of place in legislation concerning a university. The reason for leaving out this phrase was the same as that for which the name of God was left out of our Constitution. There is, as you know, a school of thought which holds that anything which lends itself to religious colouring should be excluded from a legal enactment.

I would, however, like to impress upon you that it is immaterial that this phrase has been left out of the Act. It may find no place in legislation, but it certainly has a place—and perhaps a place of supreme importance—in the life of this University. I will declare with all the emphasis at my command that the objective as defined by Gurudev, including the phrase left out in the Act, must remain the objective of your University and of all its teachers and its pupils. The truth is that in these three terms used by Gurudev :

*Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam;*

we have a conception of God which rises above all narrow limi-

tations of race, religion or creed. I may also tell you that if the term *Advaitam* is translated into Arabic, it would read as *Wahidahu-La-Shariq*: the One who has no second, which is the highest affirmation of the monotheistic belief.

Another element in the objectives of the Visva-Bharati which has appealed to me greatly is the phrase which Gurudev used in inaugurating all ceremonial functions of the University. In affirming the ideal of the Visva-Bharati the Chairman first reads or causes to be read, "*Yatra-Visyam Bhavatyekaneedam*" (the whole world has here become one home). I can think of no higher conception of humanity than that expressed in this beautiful phrase. I will appeal to every one of you that whenever you have any function, you will never forget to start it with this proclamation of faith in the unity of mankind.

Today, with the passing of the Act a new order has started for you, but you must always remember that yours is a unique institution. You should therefore not merely try to imitate what other institutions do, but on the contrary try to set an example to them. You should derive your inspiration not from the practice or profession of other universities, but from the lofty ideals of Gurudev. Other universities have over the decades developed a pattern which cannot be changed overnight, even though we may desire such a change. You have the advantage of starting with a pattern which is much nearer our ideals. Your effort should therefore be that other universities should adopt the message which Gurudev gave to the Visva-Bharati. I would appeal to you that you should maintain the traditions and the spirit which till now have inspired you, and enrich them further in the spirit in which Gurudev welcomed good things from all sources.

I would like to address one word particularly to the teachers of the University. In the end, the quality of any institution depends upon the quality of its teachers. This is particularly true of a university like the Visva-Bharati which was built up by Gurudev, not on external pomp and grandeur, but on the foundation of a spirit of service of his fellow-men. I am sure that those who have come to teach at this University have done so because they share that spirit. I know that materially many of you would have fared better if you had gone elsewhere, but nevertheless you came here to a life of comparative poverty

because the ideal of Gurudev appealed to you. Now that the Visva-Bharati has become a Central University, I am sure that the same spirit will continue to inspire you. I do not for a moment suggest that emoluments here should be such as to deny teachers a reasonable standard of life, but I do insist that the teachers of this University owe it to the memory of Gurudev that they will not compare their scales of salary with those in other universities, but continue to teach according to the tradition he built up. This tradition has distinguished Visva-Bharati in the past and I am confident it will continue to do so in the future as well.

The same remarks will apply to the new constructions you have to undertake to house new departments of the University. I have already said that Gurudev did not depend on buildings to found his institution, but laid it down that much of the teaching should be in the open. This was in pursuance of his principles that education should be in conformity with nature, and keep as close to nature as possible. I am sure that the new constructions which you undertake will be in keeping with the traditions and atmosphere of the Visva-Bharati, and you will place your emphasis on the spirit rather than on the bricks and mortar of the buildings.

You have today a very heavy responsibility, for you have to bear the burden which Gurudev passed on to you. While he was with us, we could always look to him for inspiration and guidance, but now that he is no longer with us in body, we have to interpret to the best of our ability his ideals and principles. My sincere wish is that the authorities of the new University will all be inspired by his spirit, and carry out their duties and the objectives of Gurudev in a manner which he would have found commendable. I need hardly assure you that so far as the Government are concerned, we will always take a special interest in your achievements, and watch your progress with interest and care.

I wish you godspeed in your new career as a Central University in the name of the One Supreme Being who is *Shantam*, *Shivam* and *Advaitam*.



## PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND EDUCATION

When in May 1948, I formulated a twelve-point programme of social education for the country, one of the main services I had in mind was the provision of a Public Library for adult education. The need of such library service in any programme of social education is self-evident. It is obvious that adults who acquire literacy at a comparatively advanced age cannot be expected to read many books during their period of education. There is therefore a risk that they may relapse into illiteracy, unless they are provided with books, journals and newspapers that will be both interesting and intelligible to them. Ordinary newspapers and journals and the average type of literature would not always serve their ends, as these would employ vocabulary that may at times be too difficult for the new literates. We have a sad example of this in the experience of the large number of soldiers who were made literate during World War II, but on demobilisation relapsed into illiteracy through lack of suitable literature.

Such a library service is necessary not only for adult neo-literates but also for the children who complete their basic education. The vast majority of them give up their studies before literacy has become permanently established. This is also one reason why in spite of the fact that some 40 per cent of the children of school age attend basic and other primary schools and have been doing so for some decades, the percentage of literacy for the adult population is still so low. A library service which would provide suitable literature for those who have attended basic and primary schools is therefore an essential condition for the maintenance and development of literacy in the country.

I was therefore much pleased to learn that at its 4th General Conference held in Paris in 1949, Unesco resolved to organise in one of the member-states a pilot project for public libraries. The project was to be undertaken at the request and with the assistance of the State and as part of its campaign for the spread of

fundamental education. I was anxious that India should be the member-state to make that request and establish a pilot library with the assistance of Unesco. I felt that Delhi, where the social education programme had already been in operation for some time, offered a very suitable venue for the location of such a pilot project. Delhi is a large city and at the same time within easy reach of rural areas. It is served by a system of roads which makes it accessible from all parts of the State. Much is being done both in the city and in the rural areas in the sphere of mass education by the Government, the Municipal and the District Board authorities and private individuals. Delhi has a cosmopolitan population and seems eminently suitable to satisfy some of the requirements defined by Unesco for the location of a Public Library Service. I felt that if this pilot project could succeed in Delhi with its varied populations engaged in different kinds of activities, it would serve as an excellent model which could be followed elsewhere in India and outside.

I am very happy that after discussions with Unesco it has been possible to arrive at an agreement and the first Unesco Pilot Project for Public Libraries has been established here. It will form an integral part of the literacy drive of the city and its environs and its service will be 'directed primarily towards the needs of newly literate adults. It is, however, not our intention to forget the needs of the general reader. There will also be provision of books which will suit the taste of adults of varied educational backgrounds. Nor have we forgotten the needs of children and the Library will have a section devoted specially to them. In accordance with the spirit of our Constitution and the Unesco Public Libraries Manifesto, the Delhi Public Library will be a free public library and open to all members of the community "without distinction of race, religion, class or occupation."

It was felt that a public library of this type would be best administered by an autonomous body. Accordingly, by a resolution of the Government of India, the Delhi Library Board has been set up to administer the Library under the general supervision and control of the Ministry of Education and Unesco.

The Preamble of the resolution which sets up the Delhi Library Board has defined the object of the Library as

*providing for the people of the city of Delhi a public library service and a community centre for popular education which shall be a model for all*

*public library development in India and in all countries where similar development of public libraries can be undertaken. The Library shall be designed so as to carry out the policy of the Unesco Public Libraries Manifesto and to serve the needs of popular education without distinction of class, creed, occupation or race, and specially those of neo-literates and children.*

Under the agreement between the Government of India and Unesco, it has been agreed that the Government of India will contribute during the fiscal year 1950-51 a sum of Rs. 1,07,000 for the establishment of the Pilot Library. The Delhi Municipal Committee has agreed to contribute Rs. 25,000 annually. Unesco will contribute, subject to the vote of the General Assembly, sixty thousand dollars in the form of payment for the services of an Advisory Director, Fellowships, salary of the Director for one year, the supply of equipment for adult education and extension work and also for the supply and production of books specially required for neo-literates.

By the end of September 1950, over 5,000 books were secured for the Library of which a little less than a thousand are in English, over 3,500 are in Hindi and over 500 are in Urdu. Foreign interest in the project is evidenced by the donation of books by Care, the National Book Centre in London and the Silver Burdett Company of New York.

As indicated above, the Library is intended not only to supply books and other reading material to adults and children but also to serve as a community centre for popular education. In order to make the place attractive, a garden has been laid out in front of the Library to provide open air reading space. It is proposed that the garden will be flood-lit and will enable adults to read in comfort on summer nights.

The connection between a library and a garden may not be apparent to many, but men who are real lovers of literature have always associated gardens with books. Hafiz, the famous poet of Shiraz, has given us his conception of the highest form of life in the following verses :

*Dū yār-i-zeerak o waz bāda-i kuhan dū-manee  
Farāghatee o kitabee o goosha-i-chamanee;  
Man in maqām ba dunyā-o-'āqbat na-deham  
Agarche dar pāi-am uftand khalq anjumanee,*

*Two wise friends, two goblets of old wine, amplitude  
of leisure, books and a corner of a garden :  
If these five things are provided, I will have no other  
desire in life.  
If I were offered instead all the gifts of this life and  
the next  
I would still refuse the exchange.*

I have every hope that visitors to this Library will find at least the two wise friends mentioned by Hafiz, if not more. Leisure also will, I hope, be theirs. They will also have the opportunity of reading the books of their choice in a selected corner of the garden. One condition will, of course, remain unfilled. In these days of a crusade for dry Delhi, I cannot promise the readers any goblets of wine, whether old or new ! I may, however, assure them that efforts will be made to supply fresh *sherbat* or hot tea in place of vintage wine, even though I know that to adherents of the cup this may appear a poor recompense !

I would also like to place on record, on behalf of the Government of India and on my own behalf, our appreciation of the help and co-operation we have received from Unesco in the development of this project. Unesco has not only given us the services of an Advisory Director, but also provided a Fellowship under which an Indian national has been trained for assuming charge as the permanent Director of the Library. When Dr. Jaime Torres Bodet was in Delhi in March this year, he took a personal interest in the development of the scheme. I am thankful to him and to Unesco for having placed at our disposal the services of Mr. Edward Sydney, M.C., F.L.A., Borough Librarian of Leyton, London, England, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Library Association. Mr. Sydney is internationally known for his practical experience of the use of Public Library in the cause of adult education and has rendered us great service in the planning and establishment of the library.

I know that this Library is only in its initial stage and we cannot show any tangible results yet. I have, however, no doubt in my mind that the foundations have been truly laid and will in course of time, if we are true to our ideals, be a magnificent edifice of service to the people at large. The task of social edu-

cation which faces our country is a colossal one and will require the devotion and service of all our national workers. I am happy that the Prime Minister who has devoted himself to the evocation of a scientific temper in our people is with us today. I am confident that his association with this project at its very inception will give to our efforts a sense of rational purpose and direction. May his large-hearted vision and his devotion to the eternal values of life inspire all the workers of the Delhi Pilot Library ! I am confident that this Library will be an exemplar not only for other libraries in India, but for libraries in all Asian countries.

## AGRICULTURE AND EDUCATION

I am glad to welcome you to this Conference, the main initiative for calling which belongs to my friend and colleague, Mr. Munshi. When he first suggested to me that there should be a meeting of Vice-Chancellors and others to consider how we can improve agricultural education in the country, I readily agreed. There is perhaps no single issue which is of greater importance for the future well-being of our country.

A hard fact which we must face is that the economic life of India is not properly balanced between agriculture and industry. Though there has been considerable development in industry in India in the last fifty years, we cannot, by any means, call India an industrial country. The basis of our life is still agricultural and the vast majority of our people depend on agriculture for their livelihood. In fact, curious as it may seem, the pressure on the land has on the whole been increasing in spite of the growth of our industries. It is therefore all the more regrettable that we cannot produce enough food even to meet our own requirements. Roughly, eighty per cent of our people are in some way or the other connected with the land and yet we have to depend upon foreign countries to get enough food for our people. In sharp contrast, we find that the U.S.A., where not even 1/5th of the people work on the land, not only produces all its food but exports vast quantities to other parts of the world. We must therefore ask ourselves the reason why with 4/5ths of our people on the land we are still deficit in food supply, whereas other countries which do not use even 1/5th of their manpower for the production of food are surplus areas.

A searching enquiry into this problem is the more necessary as our position has not always been so bad as it is today. Until some years ago, we have, in fact, been exporting wheat and other food grains, but since 1943 we seem to be suffering from a perpetual shortage. You all know about the efforts of the Governments, both at the Centre and the States, to increase the

---

*Speech at a meeting of the Vice-Chancellors of the Indian Universities and others, New Delhi, November 3, 1951*

production of food through the Grow More Food Campaign. I think you will all agree that the results have not been commensurate with our efforts. 1951 has been a particularly difficult year. Even before the crisis eased through the help and co-operation of countries like the U.S.A., the U.K., Russia and China, new dangers had already appeared and threatened us with an equally difficult situation for the coming year. Obviously, we cannot always depend upon foreign countries to supply us with food. The present situation is difficult enough, but when we remember the rate at which our population is growing, the future difficulties are sure to be still greater. Unless we can devise methods by which the productivity of our land will increase so that we may provide adequate sustenance, not only to our existing population, but also to the additional mouths that will have to be fed, all the hopes we have cherished for the future of our country will be subject to a vast question mark. It is in this context that we have met here today. As educationists whose business is to train the manpower of the country, it is our duty to suggest methods by which we can overcome the threat of perpetual food shortage.

We know that the average yield of our land is one of the poorest in the world and this is so, in spite of the fact that the quality of our soil is perhaps second to none. The only explanation is that our methods of agriculture are not fully effective. We must therefore think in terms of a change in our agricultural methods. This can be achieved only if our agricultural education is thoroughly recast. I think you will all agree that the present system of agricultural education in India is not satisfactory. It has not proved adequate even in normal times. During an emergency like the present, its shortcomings are only too apparent. Most of our universities have some provision for agricultural education, but the education is mainly theoretical, so that the results we could expect from the application of science to agriculture do not materialise. Our agricultural graduates are fit for almost everything except becoming agriculturists themselves.

Our present agricultural education is defective because it lacks adequate practical basis. An even greater defect is that agricultural education is not an essential part of the general education of the country. Education is intended to develop

the potential abilities of the individual in the context of the requirements of society. In a country like India, where agriculture is not only the main profession but the dominant way of life, it is necessary that agriculture must enter intimately into every aspect of general education. We are now planning to transform the system of our primary education by converting it into basic education. Gandhiji, with the insight of a genius, saw that if education is to be creative and real for millions of our people, it must seek to satisfy their basic requirements of food and clothing. Intellectual development can be adequate and satisfactory only in the context of satisfying these two basic needs. Our general education, especially in the earlier stages, must therefore give a greater importance to the theory and practice of agriculture.

I have for sometime been considering the question of having some kind of conscription by which all students in our colleges and universities would be compelled to work for a period in fields and factories. I have, however, come to the conclusion that for various reasons this cannot be immediately done. In Western countries, the labour of young people has been effectively and usefully employed, as the problem of these countries is primarily one of shortage of labour. In our country, if there is an excess in anything, it is that of manpower. In fact, it will not be incorrect to say that almost all Indians are under-employed. To bring young people into the field of work would therefore only aggravate under-employment. The difficulties in the way of conscripting large numbers of young people for service on the land may be mentioned here. The amateur labour of students and young persons generally proves to be more expensive. We must also, in view of the poverty of the majority of our people, maintain and perhaps also pay them a small salary and allowance. Most serious of all, the massing together of large numbers of young people, isolated from families, schools, and other social and religious checks, often carries with it the risk of encouraging militarism. Apart from this, there is always the difference between forced and voluntary service. We should consider all these factors before we decide to conscript young men into service on the land.

What I have said above in regard to students in general would not, however, apply to the students of agricultural schools and



colleges. In their case, it would be a necessary part of their training to do field work for a period before they are given diplomas or degrees. You are aware that on the advice of the All India Council for Technical Education and Scientific Manpower Committee, it is proposed that engineering and technical graduates must do a period of service training before they can enter their profession. I think such training is even more necessary for the students of agricultural schools and colleges.

I would in fact go further. While the idea of conscripting students in schools and colleges would be difficult to put into practice, I do not see any reason why colleges and schools in the rural or semi-rural areas should not have an agricultural section attached to them. The difficulties I have mentioned above arise only when the students are taken away from their homes or places of normal residence. There would be no such difficulty if students are required to do some agricultural work in the course of their normal college or school life. The difficulty of finding adequate land may stand in the way of carrying out this programme in educational institutions in large towns and cities. There is, however, no reason why schools and colleges in the rural areas or small towns should not have attached to them sufficient land which can be utilised for the purpose. Even colleges in larger towns and cities can co-operate in such a programme by establishing centres where, during vacations and other holidays, students can acquire an experience of simple practical agriculture by working on the farms. Many of you know that the universities in the U.K. and the U.S.A. sometimes adopt villages. I hope that in India also, schools and colleges in urban areas will adopt villages. There should be friendly competition among educational institutions as to which have done the best rural work. I hope that this Conference will devise some method of carrying out this programme, and also advise the Indian Council for Agricultural Research to set up a section devoted exclusively to the development of agricultural education in schools and colleges.

One grave drawback to which I would like to draw your attention is our curious failure to realise the dangers inherent in our present food situation. It is strange that in spite of a shortage of food and the people's knowledge of the fact, there is no passionate urge among them to increase food production in

the country. If our young men and women in colleges and schools are not sensitive to our problems, how are we going to overcome the perils which face us ? I am sure, you can all help in creating in young men and women a sense of the urgency of our problems. There are of course certain necessary measures which lie outside the sphere of educational authorities. Colleges and schools can, however, contribute a great deal to the solution of the problem if they create in young men and women the enthusiasm to increase the food production of the country. I am sure that if the universities provide extension education in agriculture, it will not only improve the quality of our agriculture but also make a deep impression on the public mind. It will help to break down the barriers which divide the literate classes from the unlettered. It will also improve the quality of our educated classes by bringing them nearer to the soil and giving a more practical bias to their minds.

I referred earlier to countries where agriculture is more productive, for each unit of manpower gives far better results than in India. It is obvious that if we are to improve our agricultural production, we must profit by the experience of such countries. We must therefore create closer contacts with all countries which have applied scientific methods to agriculture and shown tangible results of such application. Naturally, the first country we think of in this connection is the U.S.A. In industry as well as in agriculture, she has made a phenomenal progress. We must try to adopt and adapt her methods in both fields. She has under the Fullbright Act and other enactments made a generous provision for receiving from and sending out to India teachers and students from various fields of study. We must take full advantage of her generosity and utilise the services of the American experts in the various fields of agriculture.

The universities have always and in all countries played a leading part in transforming the quality of the life of the people. In order to perform this function successfully, the universities must base their programmes on the real needs of the country. Until now, our university education has proved inadequate because, among other faults, it has ignored agriculture, which is the basis of Indian life. I would therefore appeal to all educationists to have this deficiency overcome by giving an agricultural bias to our school education and introducing in agricultural

education in the universities practical work in farms. In addition, schools and colleges in the rural and semi-rural areas must encourage all students—whatever may be their subjects of study—to devote a part of their normal scholastic routine to work on the land. For schools and colleges in cities and towns, I would suggest their adoption of villages where students may participate in a programme of complete reconstruction of village life. Last but not least, I would appeal to all Vice-Chancellors assembled here to infuse in their students a sense of the urgency about our food problem. I sincerely hope that they will urge both teachers and students to devote their intellectual and physical energies to the solution of this most pressing of our problems. I am confident that if we all make a serious and concerted effort, we can overcome our food shortage and place the Indian economy on a sound and healthy basis.

## CONCEPT OF MAN IN THE EAST AND THE WEST

On behalf of the Government of India and on my own behalf I have great pleasure in welcoming you all to this Symposium. Unesco has, since its inception, been organising seminars, discussion groups and symposia for the consideration of various problems that affect the relations of nations and countries and for the creation of better understanding through the exchange of knowledge and experience in many fields. This Symposium is concerned with an even more fundamental issue. Today, philosophers of the East and the West have met to discuss the Concept of Man himself. Who can deny that this issue is the basic one of the modern age, and on its satisfactory solution depends the future of man? I am therefore specially happy to welcome you here to this ancient land of philosophers and seers. I earnestly hope that the spirit of India with its long traditions of wisdom and spirituality will inspire all your deliberations.

### I

In the last six thousand years or more, the human-being has travelled over a vast region from his early beginnings in primitive society. This period has seen man overcome many hidden obstacles and meet the challenge of inanimate nature and the animate world. In spite of all the vicissitudes which man has had to face during this period, there has, on the whole, been continuous and steady progress in wresting from nature some of her greatest secrets. Veil after veil has been torn asunder from the hidden face of nature and secrets that are still unknown are yielding to his quest.

While man's triumphant progress in unveiling the face of nature has been steady and continuous, can we say with equal confidence that he has succeeded in unveiling the lineaments of his own self? Can we say that after six thousand years of quest

---

*Inaugural speech at the Symposium on the Concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in the East and the West, New Delhi, December 13, 1951*

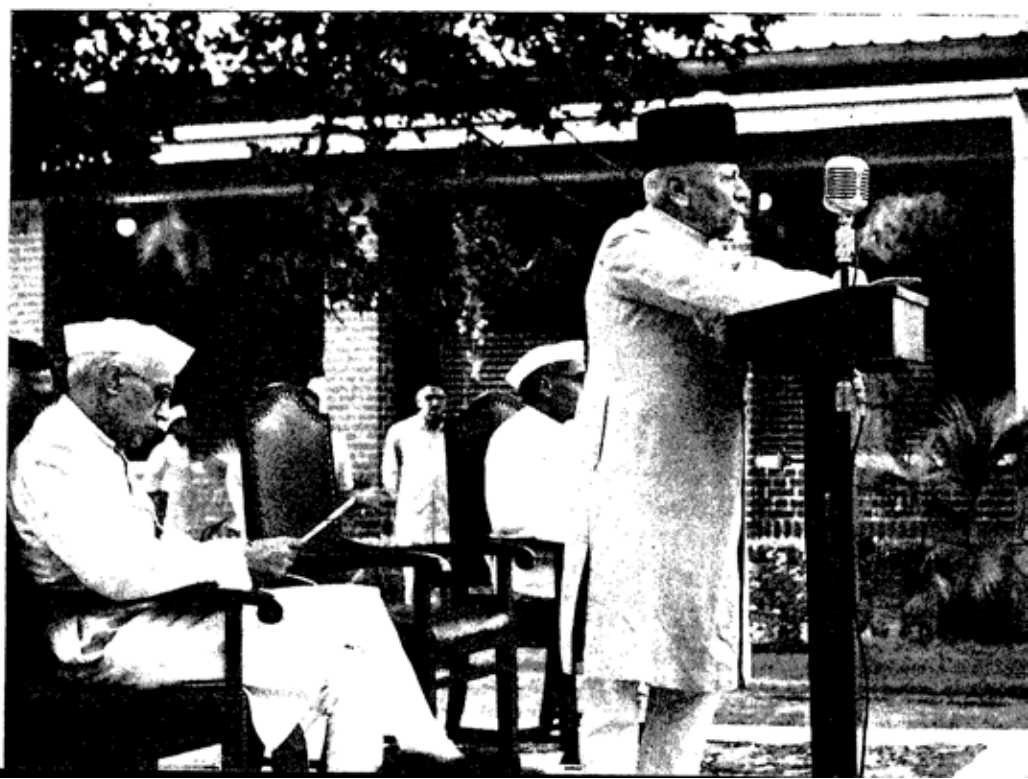


*Inaugurating the Unesco Symposium on the 'Concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in the East and the West, New Delhi, December 1951*



*Leaving New Delhi on his Goodwill Mission to Europe and the Middle East and to attend the Unesco General Conference in Paris, May 1951*

*Delivering the Presidential Address at the  
Delhi Public Library, October 1951*





*Inaugurating the Indian Institute of  
Technology at Kharagpur, August 1951*



of the Real, man today sees himself as he essentially is ? I think you will agree that we have to make a sad confession in this matter. The mirror that man has fashioned reflects all aspects of the world but not his own inner self. We have to admit that man has not yet been able to form a clear picture of his own nature. The secrets of the universe are clearer to him than the secrets of the self. For some three thousand years or more, philosophers have again and again asked what man is, whence he comes and whither he goes. The questions still remain largely unanswered. It is obvious that man cannot achieve a satisfactory solution of the problems of the individual, society, nations and international relations until he knows clearly the nature of his own self and determines what the place of man is in the vastness of the universe.

The basic issue before you is the consideration of this problem. You have met to discuss the Concept of Man as it has been enunciated by thinkers in the East and the West. I would, at the very beginning, like to emphasise that in speaking of the East and the West, we are thinking only of certain special features in the thought of these regions. This cannot and does not mean that there are not large areas of common and agreed ground. Man all over the world has adopted common methods of reasoning and thought. The human reason is one and identical. Human feelings are largely similar. The human will operates more or less in the same manner in similar situations everywhere. It is therefore natural that the human way of looking at himself and the world is largely common in different parts of the world. Their attitudes towards the unknown mysteries of existence are also largely similar. The Greeks who looked with admiration and awe upon the peaks of Olympus shared the same feelings as the Indian who meditated in the valleys of the Himalayas and looked upon its eternal snow.

In spite of large areas of agreement, human minds in different regions of the world have adopted a different approach to some of their common problems. Even where the approach has not been different, there has been a tendency to place a different emphasis on the different aspects of common problems and common solutions. No two situations are exactly alike. It was inevitable that people in different regions should pay greater attention to different aspects of common problems. It is on

account of such differences in emphasis that we describe a particular mode of thought as characteristic of a particular nation or region. It is from this point of view that I will try to formulate what are the differences that characterise the East from the West. I think you will all agree that even where the solutions are similar in pattern and outline, there are differences in shade and colour which justify us in calling some of the solutions Eastern and others Western.

There are, as I have said, many points in common between the views of philosophers in the East and the West but there is one distinction in emphasis between India, Greece and China which strikes us from the very beginning of recorded history. In India, the emphasis of philosophy has, on the whole, been on the inner experience of man. Philosophers here have sought to understand man's inner nature, and in this pursuit have gone beyond the regions of sense, intellect and even reason and sought to assert the identity of man with a deep hidden Reality. In Greece, the philosopher has been interested mainly in understanding the nature of the world outside. He has sought to determine the place of man in the outer world. His view has therefore been, on the whole, more extrovert than in India. In China, on the other hand, philosophers have not worried about the inner nature of man nor about external nature but concentrated on the study of man in relation to his fellows. These differences in orientation have exerted a profound influence on later developments of philosophy in each of these regions. We find therefore that there are striking differences in their respective concepts of man.

The Greeks approached the concept of man from an external point of view. Hence we find that from the earliest times, Greek Philosophy devotes far greater attention to what man *does* rather than to what man *is*. It is true that some of the earlier Greek philosophers thought of man as essentially a spiritual entity, and we find that this is perhaps the prevailing mode of thought up to the time of Plato. With the advent of Aristotle, there began, however, a new orientation in which the attention is diverted from the idea of man to man's activities in the world here and now. Under the influence of Aristotle who defined man as a rational animal, Philosophy became more positive. In course of time, this positive, empirical and scientific attitude became the

prevailing climate of thought in the West. Rationality distinguishes man from other animals, and it is through the exercise of rationality that he has advanced far beyond his early animal origin. Nevertheless, he remains essentially and fundamentally a progressive animal. Rarely has this thought been expressed so beautifully as by the German Philosopher, Riehl. While he admits that man has descended from the animal, he points out that he has now reached a stage where he must look above and not below. He is the only animal that stands erect and can continue to do so only if his look is upward. God is the goal towards which man must strive if he is to retain his present stature.

It is true that the influence of Christianity and the persistence of the Platonic tradition remained a powerful element in European thought. Thus, we find that the scholastics in the Medieval Ages were at times theologians rather than philosophers. Even in the modern period, there is a strong religious idealistic strain in the European thought. Since the beginning of the Modern Age, this strain has, however, steadily yielded place to a philosophical outlook dominated by the concepts of science. The triumphant progress of science began in the seventeenth century and increased man's power over nature. The success of science dazzled the Western mind and induced a faith in its unfailing efficacy. The West sought to apply the concepts and methods of science in all fields of human experience and treat man also as an object among other objects. In course of time, a materialistic and scientific temper became the pervasive outlook of the West. We find a culmination of this development in the nineteenth and the twentieth century. Darwin sought to establish that man is descended from animals while Marx argued that his mentality is largely the resultant of his material environment. Freud, in the twentieth century, went a step further and taught that not only is man descended from animals, but his mentality retains even today traces of his animal origin.

As opposed to this conception of man as a progressive animal, we find in the East a completely different concept of man. The East has from the very beginning emphasised man's intrinsic spirituality. The contemplation of the inner reality of man gave rise to the philosophy of Vedanta in India and Sufism in Arabia. This spiritual concept of man has deeply influenced the mentality of man throughout the East and is not unknown even in the

West. According to this outlook, we cannot understand the essence of man if we regard him as only a material entity. The real nature of man can be understood only if we conceive of him as an emanation of God. There was in Eastern philosophy a strong pantheistic strain. In the different schools of Indian philosophy, all things are regarded as expressions of God's being but even then man belongs to a special category. For he is the highest manifestation of God's being. In the words of the Gita,

"Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme to be realised,  
Thou art the ultimate resting place of the universe,  
Thou art the undying guardian of the eternal law,  
Thou art the Primal Person." (XI. 18)

Similarly, we find that according to the Sufis, man is a wave of the boundless sea that is God. He is a ray of the Sun that is God. Man can regard himself as different from the Eternal Being only so long as his vision is clouded by the evil of ignorance. Once there is enlightenment, all these distinctions dissolve and man recognises himself as a moment in the being of the Eternal.

The concept of man which the East has evolved regards man as not merely an animal superior to all earthly creatures but as essentially different in nature. Man is not the first among equals but has a being which is higher than that of any other creature. He is not only a progressive animal, but reveals in his being the lineaments of God Himself. In fact, his nature is so high and elevated that nothing higher is conceivable to human reason. In the words of the Chhandogya Upanishad :

"That is Reality. That is Atman (Soul). That art thou."  
(9 : 4)

This doctrine has also been beautifully expressed in Arabic :

*Man arafa nafsahu faqad arafa rabbahu*  
"He who knows himself knows God."

The same principle, when further developed, gives rise to the idea that man is not an isolated individual but contains in himself the entire universe. In the words of the Gita,

"Here today, behold the whole universe, moving and unmoving and whatever else thou desirest to see, O Gudakesa (Arjuna), are all unified in My body." (XI : 7)

A Sufi poet has expressed the same concept in the Arabic verse :

*"Watahsab annaka jarmum saghir  
Wa fika antavi alemun akbaru"*

"Thou thinkest that thou art a small body : thou knowest not that a universe greater than the physical world is contained in thee."

It will be readily agreed that there can be no higher concept of man. God marks the highest limit of human thought. By identifying man with God, the Eastern concept of man elevates him to godhead. Man has therefore no other goal but to re-establish his identity with God. He thus becomes superior to the entire creation.

## II

We have till now discussed the concept of man from the point of view of the philosophies in the East and the West. We now wish to review briefly what religion has to say on the question. If we consider the attitude of Judaism and Christianity, we find a clear statement in the Old Testament that God created man in his own image. From this it would follow that man shares in the attributes of God. A strong element of spiritual mysticism has characterised the attitude of Christianity and has acted as a check to the predominance of extreme materialistic tendencies.

In Islam we find traces of the influence of the same outlook. In fact, the Quran has gone a step further in its exaltation of man. The Quran proclaims that not only is man created in the image of God but is His regent on earth. In speaking of the creation of Adam, God says—

*Inni jdelunfil arde khalifa (2 : 29)*

"I want to create my viceroy on earth."

This idea of the viceroyalty of man profoundly influenced the Arab philosophers. Two things may be noted in this connection. As regent of God on earth, man has an immediate affinity with Him. This also makes man superior to all creation and makes him master not only of animal life but also of the forces of nature itself. The Quran proclaims again and again :

"Whatever is on the earth or in the heavens has been made subject to man." (XIII : 45)

It is generally recognised that Aristotle deeply influenced most of the Arab philosophers, but even in their interpretation of Aristotle, they show clear indications of the influence of the idea of man's viceroyalty of God. Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Averroes (Ibn Rushd) are metaphysically Aristotelians but their spiritual orientation in Islam makes them recognise that since man shares in God's attributes, there is no limit to the heights which he can attain in both knowledge and power. Muslim scholastics like Al Ghazzali, Ar Razi, Ar Raghbi Ispahani and others have further elaborated this idea in their various philosophical writings.

We must, however, admit that while the conception of man in both Vedanta and Sufism gives him a lofty status, neither of these philosophies can escape the charge that if, on the one hand, they set no limit to human capacity, they, on the other hand, imply an element of fatalism that circumscribes man's power. The explanation of this paradox is to be found in their concept of the relation of man to God. Since man is an emanation of divinity, whatever man does is ultimately God's doing : whatever happens is due to the will of God. From this it is but another step to think of man as a mere toy in the hands of fate.

It has been said that while the concepts of Vedanta and Sufism in their pure form have been responsible for some of the highest spiritual attainments of man, they have to some extent acted as an impediment to human progress on the secular plane. The emphasis on the unity of man with God made society relatively insensitive to human suffering, as such suffering was regarded as mere illusion. We therefore find that Eastern societies have often been indifferent to the removal of the causes of social malaise. This explains why some modern thinkers are seeking for a formulation of the philosophy of Vedanta without its fatalism.

We find a similar paradox in the Western concept of man. A philosophy of materialism would, *prima facie*, seem to indicate a determinist outlook on life. Since the law of causality reigns throughout the material world, the same law would tend to hold in the field of human action. We find the culmination of this tendency in the psychological theories of the Behaviourists. The Western mind, however, asserted itself against such a deterministic concept and exhibited an energy of spirit which has rarely been equalled and perhaps never surpassed.

One of the main tasks of the present Symposium should be to examine how we can combine these two concepts which have so profoundly influenced both philosophy and religious outlook in the East and the West. The Eastern conception of man's status, if combined with the Western concept of progress, would open out to man the possibility of infinite advance without the risks implicit in the misuse of science. It may also indicate a way out of the fatalism which otherwise seems to follow from the Eastern conception of man's identity with God. The Eastern conception of man's status is not only consistent with the progress of Western science, but in fact offers an intelligible explanation of how scientific progress is possible. If man were merely a developed animal, there would be a limit to his advancement. If, however, he shares in God's infinity, there can be no limit to the progress he can achieve. Science can then march from triumph to triumph and solve many of the riddles which trouble man even to this day.

There is a further reason why a synthesis of the Eastern and the Western concepts of man is of the greatest importance to man's future. Science in itself is neutral. Its discoveries can be used equally to heal and to kill. It depends upon the outlook and mentality of the user whether science will be used to create a new heaven on earth or to destroy the world in a common conflagration. If we think of man as only a progressive animal, there is nothing to prevent his using science to further interests based on the passions he shares in common with animals. If, however, we think of him as an emanation of God, he can use science only for the furtherance of God's purposes, that is the achievement of peace on earth and goodwill to all men.

### III

I have tried to indicate that the Eastern and Western concepts of man are in some ways complementary. If the one has emphasised the intrinsic excellence of his being, the other has laid stress on the progress he *has* achieved and *can* achieve through his own efforts. If the one has stressed the spiritual elements in his nature, the other has pointed out that spiritual excellence must also have a requisite physical basis. If in spite of differences in emphasis, the Western and the Eastern concepts of man can

be reconciled, there is no reason why the philosophy of education in these two regions should not also be fitted into a wider philosophy of education for the world.

In both the East and the West, the prevalent systems of education have given rise to various paradoxes. In the East, we find a disproportionate emphasis on individual salvation. Man sought knowledge as a means to his own redemption. The Eastern mode of thought with its pre-occupation with individual salvation has at times paid inadequate attention to social welfare and progress. In the West, on the contrary, there has been a greater emphasis on the need of social progress. In fact, considerations of social welfare have at times led to the growth of totalitarian societies in which the individual has been suppressed. Today when East and West have been brought nearer each other through the operations of science, it is necessary that the bias, whether in favour of the individual or of society, should be rectified and a system of education evolved which will give due regard to both individual and social values.

Herein lies the importance of education in the modern world. Experience has shown that education can profoundly affect the development of individuals and, through individuals, of societies. If the individual is not an integrated personality, society cannot be harmonious. The function of education in the modern world is therefore to build up integrated individuals in an integrated society and the concept of both the East and the West must contribute to such a development.

Before I conclude, there is one other problem to which I would like to draw your attention. The question often arises whether education is a means or an end. I would say that on the whole the West has looked upon education as a means while the East has looked upon it as an end. If education is regarded as a means, the question arises, what is the end for which it is the means. The West has often regarded social welfare as the end, but social welfare is a concept which can be interpreted in different ways. In any case, the tendency to regard education as a means leads to some diminution in the value of education. I am inclined to think that the Eastern concept shows a truer understanding of its real nature. By regarding education as an end in itself we recognise knowledge to be one of the ultimate values. I do not think that any Western philosopher would deny



the importance of knowledge but its value cannot be fully appreciated unless education is recognised as an end in itself. Further, such recognition would raise the status of man. From this point of view also I am inclined to think that we should look upon education as an end rather than as a mere means to some external good.

#### IV

To sum up. In the Eastern concept, man as an emanation of God shares in His infinite attribute and is capable of achieving mastery over the entire creation. In the Western concept, man is no doubt an animal but there is no limit to the progress that he can achieve in the material field. His scientific achievements are visible proof of his superiority over the rest of creation, and have given him domination over the sky, sea and earth. We may therefore say that the Western practice has substantiated the claim which the Eastern theory has made in respect of man. Since, however, the Western concept, has not emphasised the spiritual origin of man, his triumphs in the scientific field have themselves become a source of danger to his survival. If therefore the achievements of western science can be utilised in the Eastern spirit of man's affinity with God, science would become an instrument not of destruction but for the establishment of human prosperity, peace and progress.

I hope this Symposium of philosophers from the East and the West will succeed in reconciling the concept of man as a spiritual entity with the concept of man as capable of infinite material progress and thus help in the realisation of the Kingdom of God on earth.

## THE INDIAN HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION

I regret very much that circumstances do not, on this occasion, allow me to participate in person in your annual deliberations. You have met in a city with a historic past, and you are meeting at a time which is of great historic importance in our national life. We are witnessing in India today the operation of the greatest experiment in democracy that the world has seen. At such times, it is an advantage to withdraw for a while from the demands of the immediate present, and survey the majestic unfolding of events which constitutes man's historic past. Such a survey enables us to see things in their proper perspective, and restores a sense of proportion which we are at times apt to lose in the hurry of passing events. I was therefore anxious to be with you today, but I regret that circumstances have not permitted me to do so.

There is another reason why this meeting of the Commission has a special importance. At the end of the present general elections, a new regime will be ushered, and a new government formed. At such a time it would be proper to survey what has been achieved in the course of the last four years, and see how far they come up to our expectations.

Some of you may remember that on the first occasion I spoke to you I indicated some of the duties which our National Archives must perform. You are aware that it was at first only a Records Office, but with the achievement of independence, we felt that it must be developed into truly representative National Archives, where all available records, documents, Sanads, Farmans and ancient manuscripts dealing with our history may be stored. I am happy to tell you that in the course of the last four years there has been considerable progress in both the collection and preservation of records and manuscripts. During the year under review, records of the defunct Agencies of the late Political Department have been concentrated in its muniment room.

*Inaugural address at the Twenty-eighth Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission, Jaipur, December 26, 1951*

Among the records thus acquired are 1,710 files of the late Bundelkhand Agency ranging from 1804, 30,000 files of the late Central India Agency going back to 1861 and 27,000 files of the Punjab States Residency records (1937-47). Among other collections of records received are those of the late Hyderabad Residency and Baroda Residency and West India Kathiawad Agency. The total number of Residency records collected was 2,25,600 files and 30 volumes.

Another project of the Department in the field of acquisition deserves to be specially noted. A programme has been put into operation to secure microfilm copies of records and other historical manuscripts of Indian interest from foreign archival repositories and libraries. Copies of the major portion of the manuscripts included in the celebrated British Museum collection, known as *Additional Manuscripts*, have already been obtained. The most important items acquired include :

- (a) the documents relating to the Portuguese Settlement in India going back to 1497;
- (b) the colossal collection of official and private papers of Warren Hastings, Lord George Macarthey, Lord Wellesley;
- (c) the Persian Farmans and Sanads granted to the Dutch East India Company during the 17th century; and
- (d) the original letters of Lord Clive, the whole covering 50,000 exposures or about 1,00,000 manuscript pages.

Other acquisitions include copies of manuscripts from—

- (a) John Rylands Library, covering 46,000 manuscript pages;
- (b) the National Library of Wales, covering 4,000 manuscript pages;
- (c) the Dutch State Archives at the Hague, covering 1,20,000 manuscript pages;
- (d) the Archives of the Department of Seine-et-Oise, covering 4,000 manuscript pages; and
- (e) the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, covering 3,000 pages.

Efforts are also being made to collect materials of Indian interest from the other repositories such as the Public Record Office, London, the Archives Nationales, Paris, and private

collections such as those of Earl of Powis and Lt.-Col. Malet in England. An arrangement has been made with the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, for the compilation of a list of the manuscripts of Indian interest at the Public Record Office, London. The Department is also continuing its task of tracing Indian materials in other foreign repositories with the help of printed catalogues and other available reference media. The collection when completed will transform the National Archives into a unique centre of research on the past of this vast subcontinent.

You may remember that I had in my speech in December 1948 said that there were manuscripts and documents in private hands which should be acquired as quickly as possible. Such work has to be done mainly by our Regional Committees and I am glad to say that some interesting documents have already been acquired through their efforts. The task of locating further documents of historical interest is continuing and correspondence is being carried on with several owners of manuscripts with a view to exploring the possibility of acquiring them for the National Archives.

The second task I had mentioned was that of the cataloguing and analysing such records. It is obvious that without a proper classification and indexing of such records, they would be of little use to scholars and historians. How stupendous this task will be is clear from the fact that the total number of records received for custody during 1948-50 exceeded 14,74,000 files and nearly 14,000 volumes. These records, which consist mostly of those of the late Political Department and their defunct agencies, were received by the Department in a state of utmost confusion conceivable. Their contents have yet to be examined and lists to be prepared but the first step towards cataloguing and analysing has been taken by checking the records and placing them in shelves. Another important work in this respect is the preparation of reference aids to the records. Particular mention may be made of the summary lists prepared during the year of the late Public Department records from 1761 to 1815, covering 1,13,451 documents. Other record groups listed include those of the Survey of India from 1865 to 1873, Bengal Original Political Consultations, 1831-1843, Sambalpur Papers from 1849-1859 and Central India Agency Records from 1818 to 1857. The

listing of the Persian records in the Department has also been resumed and papers up to 1805 have been listed.

Among other works under the head, reference may be made to the indexing programme under which the Department is to bring out a comprehensive index of the records of the late Foreign and Political Department. The indexing work in the first volume in the series, covering the period 1756-1780, has been completed, and the work of general checking and editing is continuing.

You are aware through what financial difficulties the country has been passing in recent years. Our programme of publication was therefore slowed down, but all the same I am happy to say there has been considerable progress in the calendaring of the Persian records in our custody. The 9th volume of the series, covering the years 1790-91, was brought out during the year, and the printing of the 8th volume, covering the period 1787-89, is in progress. Work on further volumes, viz., Vol. X, 1792-93, and Vol. XI, 1794-95, is in progress. Under the publication programme, the Department is also to bring out edited and annotated volumes of original records for the use of scholars and research workers. One volume of records, viz., Vol. I of *Fort William—India House Correspondence* (Public Series), 1748-56, has been completed for the press. This volume has been edited by Dr. K. K. Datta under the general editorship of the Director of Archives. Among the other volumes completed are Volume XIII (*Public and Separate Revenue*) 1796-1800, edited by Dr. P. C. Gupta, and Volume XVII, 1792-95 (*Secret, Foreign and Political Series*), edited by Prof. Y. J. Taraporewala. The work on a number of volumes is expected to be completed very soon. The Government of India are doing their best to have the volumes printed as soon as they are ready.

The Department will also publish important series of records in collaboration with learned institutions and other private agencies. Under this scheme, it was able to bring out a volume of Sanskrit documents, covering the years 1778-1857, with the help of the Ganganath Jha Research Institute, to whom the thanks of the Department are due. The volume was jointly edited by Dr. S. N. Sen and Mahamahopadhyaya Umesha Misra, and is a storehouse of information on the legal acumen of the indigenous jurist during the 18th and the early part of the 19th century. The Department is glad to be able to report that the

printing of another volume, *Punjab Akhbars* 1839-41, which was undertaken on behalf of the Department, by the Khalsa Historical Society is well nigh complete, and a volume of *Elphinstone Correspondence*, Nagpur period, 1804-08, entrusted to the Nagpur University Historical Society, is also ready for the press. Other volumes on which work is in progress are a collection of Hindi Documents undertaken by the University of Allahabad, and another of Marathi Letters entrusted to the Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona. The Department is also endeavouring to publish a volume of *Persian Akhbars* with the collaboration of the University of Delhi for which negotiation is in progress.

✓ I need hardly stress before a learned audience like this the importance of the preservation of records and other historical material. Once such source material is lost it can never be restored. Its preservation is therefore a sacred duty which the present generation owes to future generations. The climate of Delhi accelerates the physical deterioration of records. We have therefore been steadily mechanising the methods of cleaning, fumigating, repairing and rehabilitating the records in order to maintain them in a proper condition. During the year under review, the vacuum fumigation chamber was set into operation. The air-cleaning unit was also received from the United States of America and is being used. Since the records of the National Archives have never been so far air-cleaned or fumigated, it has been decided to clean and fumigate them all at least once. Nearly 15,000 bundles and volumes have so far been air-cleaned and fumigated. The research laboratory has been very active; it has developed a modified method of repair with tissue using plastic adhesive suitable for manuscripts written with water soluble ink. This method has also been successfully applied not only to cases where the paper is brittle and the ink delible, but also to the repair of clay-coated Gilgit manuscripts. Useful work has also been done for the preservation of records in pencil.

Microfilming has also been used for the preservation of records which would otherwise have been lost to us. Remarkable progress has been made during the year in the implementation of our programme of microfilming pre-Mutiny records. These records are fast perishing and microfilming is perhaps the best means of preserving their contents. It has been decided to take up the

various record groups in turn and approximately 200 reels, consisting of nearly 1,30,000 exposures, have so far been completed.

In conclusion, I may say that we look to the help of the historians assembled here in a task of great national importance. Histories written during the British period have generally been either by the protagonists of the Empire, who sought to justify everything that the British did, or by patriots whom political opposition led to condemn the period as a dark age in Indian history. Now that the political conflict has been resolved, it is possible to take a dispassionate and objective view of the course of events. The British connection with India can be divided into four clearly marked periods. The first saw the purely commercial activities of the East India Company and was followed by a second phase when the Company started to meddle in the politics of the country, but under cover of helping one Indian prince or another. This second phase lasted till the grant of Diwani to the Company by the Emperor Shah Alam. Now began a third phase when the Company assumed the powers of government and administered the country through its own agents and officers. The so-called Indian Mutiny marked the end of this period and was followed by the direct rule of the British Crown. The National Archives possess invaluable source material for all these periods, and it is my earnest hope that scholars and learned societies will use this wealth in order to give us a true and objective history of India during these momentous years.

## THE NATIONAL ART TREASURES FUND

India has immense treasures of art which are scattered all over the country, sometimes in private collections and sometimes in private or State museums. Ever since the achievement of independence, I have felt that these treasures should be collected and preserved. Unless this is done—and done quickly—there is the risk that these treasures may be dispersed, or even destroyed.

One of the first measures of legislation I initiated was therefore an enactment to prohibit the indiscriminate export of art treasures to foreign countries. Formerly, any one could come and buy the rarest and most exquisite of our art objects and take them away without the permission or even the knowledge of the Government. After the recent enactment, no art object can leave the country without the Government's permission. The Government weigh various factors, such as the value of the object in question, the number of specimens in existence and other similar considerations, before permission for export is granted.

I have, however, felt that this by itself is not enough. Without Government measures for the collection and preservation of art objects, they may deteriorate through the ravages of time within the country itself. Accordingly, in the Conference on Arts, which was convened in Calcutta in August 1949, I placed my views before the Conference and it was unanimously resolved that immediate steps should be taken for the acquisition and preservation by the Government of important art objects available within the country. In pursuance of that recommendation, the Government have, during the last two or three years, started the purchase of art objects of value. In view of the financial stringency through which the country is passing, it has not been possible to execute this programme on as large a scale as we desired. Nevertheless, some progress has been made and valuable objects have been collected for the proposed National Museum and National Art Gallery.

---

*Presidential speech at the inauguration of the National Art Treasures Fund, New Delhi, February 23, 1952*



The experience of the last two years' working has, however, shown that the usual Governmental procedure is not always suitable for the acquisition of art objects. As soon as it is known that there is a valuable art object for sale, various competitors appear in the market. The Government cannot, in many cases, make an outright offer because of the financial implications of such proposals. The result is that either the object goes to some private collector or, even if the Government acquire it, it is after a lapse of time during which the price of the object tends to go up. It has happened on several occasions that the possessor of a valuable art object was willing to sell it to the Government at a comparatively low price if an immediate purchase was effected. The fact that an immediate purchase could not be made has, on occasions, led to the loss of the object in question.

I also feel that such a programme for the acquisition of art objects for the country should not be the concern of the Central Government alone. The State Governments must enter into an intimate partnership in such a programme. From the nature of the case, the State Governments have a more detailed knowledge of the sources of such objects within their own territories. There is also the element of local patriotism which would enable the State Governments to acquire the objects more readily than the distant Government of India. The financial stringency would also be eased if the burden of purchase were shared between the Government of India and the State Governments. We have therefore decided to set up an Art Treasures Fund, as a joint and co-operative effort of the Government of India and the State Governments, with the hope that it will increasingly derive its resources from private benefactors and that it will become truly a national fund.

I am happy to say that some of the State Governments have already made token payments towards this Fund. The Government of India have agreed to contribute an amount equal to the total contribution made by all the State Governments. We are also providing for donations by individual patrons of art. I have every hope that this co-operative effort of the Central Government, the State Governments and private individuals will yield funds that will enable us to make purchases of art treasures on a much larger scale.

I have indicated above some of the difficulties in following

an official procedure in the purchase of art treasures. Besides, government officials are not necessarily connoisseurs of art. I have therefore felt that the Art Treasures Fund should be administered by a body which will be mainly non-official in its character. We will in this way be able to associate with such purchases the best critics and connoisseurs of art objects in the country. As a non-official body, it will also have flexibility and would, I hope, be able to discharge its duties with greater effectiveness.

I am happy that the Prime Minister, in spite of his manifold preoccupations, has agreed to inaugurate the Art Treasures Fund. This is an indication of his abiding interest in art and will also serve to attract a nation-wide attention to the importance of the objectives for which the Fund has been set up. I hope that the Prime Minister's interest and enthusiasm will evoke similar feelings in the minds of the general public and we shall have many private patrons and lovers of art coming forward to make their donations towards this National Fund. Whenever a sufficiently large donation is made, purchases made out of it can be designated and shown as the gift of the donor when the National Museum is set up.

## ART AND THE PEOPLE

The paramount need of the modern age is a closer understanding between the peoples of different countries of the world. Scientific discoveries have effected a revolutionary change in the modes of communication and transport. Distances which in the past took months, if not years, to cross are today covered in hours. People from the distant regions of the world meet today with as much facility as citizens from different quarters of the same city. Science has thus brought together human beings physically, but has it been able to invent a machine that can bring human hearts closer to one another? We have to say with regret—no.

While science has failed to find a way of uniting human hearts, we recall with pleasure that life in its own course has done so for centuries. Cultural relations between different regions and nations date back to the very beginning of history. In fact, even before the dawn of recorded history, cultural contacts had been established among peoples of different regions. How these contacts developed in spite of the difficulties of communication is one of the unsolved mysteries of history. Some 5,000 years ago, India developed in Mohen-jo-daro a civilisation which shows clear evidence of relations with countries as far off as Mesopotamia and Egypt. There are indications that such contacts spread far and wide in spite of the obstacles of distance and the difficulties of communication.

If men established relations in days when travel was difficult, we must work for closer contacts today when travel has lost its rigours. In the past such contacts added to the richness of human life. Today when science has knit the world into one compact unit, such contacts are necessary not merely for the enrichment of life but, one may say, for the very survival of humanity. Science has placed in man's hand such tremendous powers of destruction that men of different races and countries must learn to live in friendship and amity if they are to live at all.

---

*Speech delivered at the opening of the Soviet Fine Arts Exhibition, New Delhi, March 5, 1952*

Art is one of the greatest messengers of peace and goodwill among nations. India, since the attainment of independence, has been working to create better relations among all peoples and has welcomed exhibitions of art from various friendly countries. I am glad that we can now add to that list the name of the Soviet Union. Our relations with the Soviet Union have always been friendly and it is a fitting symbol of this relationship that we are having in India today perhaps the first exhibition of original paintings of the Russian Masters. Paintings which reflect some of the recent trends in Soviet art have been shown in Paris and New York, but, I believe, this is the first occasion when the works of classical masters like Repin, Veyeshchagin and Makovsky have been shown outside the Soviet Union.

The present exhibition is a collection of paintings, sculpture and other graphic arts. It reflects the manifold activities of Soviet painters and is, I understand, representative of the various trends which flourish today within the Soviet Union. The exhibits include original works of Soviet painters and sculptors as well as the works of Russian masters of the second half of the 19th century. It is a symbol of the vitality of the Russian people that they have accepted the traditions of the old masters and transmuted them to the purposes of the new social ideals created by the Soviet Revolution.

In one of his classical utterances, Lenin declared, "Art belongs to the people. It must be lodged with its deepest roots in the very thick of the broad masses of the working people. It must be understandable to these masses and loved by them. It must unite the feelings, thoughts and will of these masses and elevate them. It must awaken and develop the artist in them." I am glad to learn from your reports that these noble ideals have been followed by the Soviet artists who have sought to reconcile the rival claims of the principles of Art for Art's sake and Art for the People.

An analysis of their implications will show that it is possible so to interpret these formulations that the conflict between them is more apparent than real. When an artist believes in Art for Art's sake, what he really intends to proclaim is the value of Art as a manifestation of the human spirit. It emphasises the fact that individual likes and dislikes must be subordinated to the claims of quality and excellence which are universal. The prin-

ciple degenerates into a false dogma only when it is interpreted to mean that the artist need pay no attention to the claims of society and fellowmen. This is obviously an untenable position. However valuable may be the qualities which the artists possess, these qualities are largely the result of a social milieu and can be sustained only by society.

The principle that Art is for the people states the obverse of the same truth. It proclaims that true art transcends the likes and dislikes of the individual and serves as the expression of feelings that are universal. It also draws pointed attention to the fact that all great art is educative in the truest sense of the term. It refines and exalts the feelings and educates the sensibilities and the imagination. The most vehement supporter of the principle of Art for Art's sake will not for a moment deny its deep and abiding social value. It is only when the principle that 'Art is for the people' is translated to mean that art must satisfy every passing caprice and whim of the populace that the principle loses its significance and becomes a mistaken dogma.

It is perhaps in a sense fitting that this exhibition of original classical and modern paintings from Russia should first be shown in India. The people of Russia have been as deeply interested in India as we are in the great experiment that you are carrying out. Some of the greatest scholars of Indian philosophy and language have been Russians. One of the standard works on Buddhist logic is the work of a Russian scholar. We also remember with interest that in the second half of the 19th century, one of the greatest Russian painters, Veyeshchagin, visited India and made over a hundred studies for his famous Indian paintings. His work created a tradition of interest in India and this will, I hope, be maintained by the works of modern Russian painters.

Politically, the world may be divided into rival camps. There may be a clash of ideologies on the plane of material interests but in the world of spirit, in the creations of art, philosophy, literature and other values, mankind is one. In this field, the creation of any individual becomes the possession of the entire human race. India, with her vast traditions of art ranging back to an immemorial past, will, I hope, serve as a stimulus to the Russian artists and I am sure that the exhibition of the works of the vigorous Soviet artists of today will be helpful to our young artists.

On behalf of the Government and people of India and on my own behalf, I extend a cordial welcome to this Exhibition of Soviet Fine Art and have great pleasure in declaring it open.

## EDUCATION SINCE INDEPENDENCE

This is the fifth annual meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education since the attainment of independence. We have also just concluded the general election in the country and a new Government is about to be formed. It seems to me a fitting occasion to review the work that has been done during the last five years and draw up our plans for further expansion of education in the country.

You will remember that on the very first occasion that I had the pleasure of addressing you, I placed before you a five-fold programme for the expansion of education in the country. This, I said, must include—

- (a) universal compulsory basic education for all children of school age,
- (b) social education for our adult illiterates,
- (c) measures for improvement in the quality of and expansion of facilities for secondary and higher education.
- (d) technical and scientific education on a scale adequate to the nation's needs, and
- (e) measures for the enrichment of the cultural life of the community by encouraging the arts and providing facilities for recreation and other amenities.

You are all aware that these last five years have been a period of immense difficulty and stress. In fact, we have, throughout this period, been living from one crisis to another. We can, however, find some satisfaction in the fact that in the midst of these vicissitudes and crises, the progress of education has been maintained, even though the rate of progress has not been as rapid as we could wish. I must also confess that when the first Government of free India was formed, our enthusiasm was unbounded. We therefore planned educational development on a scale which, on account of various factors, could not be sustained, and we have perforce had to slow down our progress.

---

*Speech at the nineteenth meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, March 15, 1952*

I will now review very briefly some of the achievements of the last five years in different fields.

In the field of elementary education, you will remember that the Central Government have, on the recommendations of the Kher Committee, accepted a sixteen-year programme in place of the original programme of forty years. We decided that the scheme should be first tried out in the Centrally administered areas as an experiment and example for the rest of the country. Accordingly, the programme is now in full operation in the Delhi State. A beginning has been made in Ajmer, and it is proposed to follow up the programme in other Centrally administered areas. The other States have not yet been able to give full effect to the programme but they are also proceeding with the gradual conversion of ordinary primary schools into junior basic schools. Facilities for the training of teachers in basic education have considerably expanded and are expanding. I have advisedly referred to the programme in the Centrally administered areas as an experiment. We must always remember that no educational system can be regarded as final or sacrosanct. We must never shut the door on the development of improved methods and techniques.

I would like to make special reference to the establishment of the Central Institute of Education. This is meant primarily as an institute of research and has already opened out several promising lines of experiment and enquiry. One interesting experiment it has undertaken concerns the adaptation of basic education to the needs of the urban community. Another experiment seeks to find out cheap media of audio-visual education suited to the requirements of our rural areas.

In the field of adult education, these five years have brought about a welcome change in the conception of the nature and purpose of such education. Instead of concentrating on literacy, as was generally done in the past, we are now planning education for the adult on broader and more liberal lines. One of your committees has laid down that the aim of such education is not merely to impart literacy but to give the adult training in all aspects of citizenship. To mark this change in the conception, the nomenclature has also been changed, and we now describe it as Social Education. This new conception, which has been accepted by all the States, is in consonance with the principle



of Fundamental Education as enunciated by Unesco and is now being implemented throughout India.

In this connection I might make a special mention of the scheme of social education which has been worked out for Delhi. Our aim is to eradicate illiteracy from the State in the course of the next three to five years. A Janata College has been established for the training of promising young men from villages in rural leadership. A new type of public library has been set up in co-operation with Unesco with a progressive and many-sided service for adults, children and women. It will cater not only for the needs of the Delhi citizens but serve as a centre of social education for the development of new techniques in this field of work. I am sure its progress will be watched with interest not only throughout India but in the whole of South East Asia where it is the first venture of its kind.

Delhi has also developed a scheme of Travelling Exhibitions and Educational Melas which have evoked considerable interest and enthusiasm among the rural people. A caravan of jeeps and other vehicles takes the exhibition to the villages and serves to stimulate interest among men as well as women. This is followed by an intensive literacy work by a band of teachers who are especially allocated to the area and conduct social education classes for a period of a month to six weeks. After this intensive campaign, the work of continuing the classes is entrusted to the local teachers and social workers who are being gradually trained in the Janata College.

You are aware that our system of secondary education has been almost entirely academic and literary. During the last five years, some of the States have, however, introduced the principle of diversification not only by establishing agricultural and technical high schools but also by including as options many vocational subjects in the ordinary schools. The problem of diverting a large proportion of children from purely literary education to various vocations and professions is receiving increasing attention at the Centre and in the States. You have been rightly pressing that the whole problem of secondary education, in its various aspects, should be surveyed by a Secondary Education Commission on an all-India basis. I am happy to inform you that the Government have accepted your recommendation and we hope that the Secondary Education Commission

—which will have among its members experts from foreign countries as well—will start work in autumn this year.

What I have said about secondary education also applies largely to university education. Until recently, our courses did not offer a sufficient variety or choice. Besides, the old system of university education was devised mainly to train up young Indians to serve the ends of an alien administration. Now, however, the need of university trained men for purposes of administration, defence, commercial and industrial expansion has increased manifold. On your advice, the Government appointed the University Education Commission under the distinguished chairmanship of Professor Radhakrishnan. The recommendations of that Commission have already been endorsed by you and have been generally accepted by the Government. Legislation has already been undertaken to give effect to some of these recommendations so far as they affect the three Central Universities of Aligarh, Banaras and Delhi. In accordance with these recommendations, the Visva-Bharati has been constituted into a fourth Central University. It has also been decided to set up a University Grants Commission and I hope that it will start functioning in the coming financial year. We have in hand certain proposals for the improvement of standards in the universities throughout the country and better co-ordination of facilities for education at the university level. Considerable grants have also been made to the universities for the expansion of facilities in research and post-graduate education in the sciences. We are now considering the steps to be taken to help the universities in developing their libraries and laboratories and improving facilities for the study of the humanities.

It is, however, in the field of technical education that I can report the greatest progress during the last five years. On the recommendations of the All India Council for Technical Education and the Scientific Manpower Committee, large grants have been made to the universities and other higher technical institutions. In the first phase of the development programme, fourteen technical institutions in different parts of the country were selected and capital grants amounting to over Rs. 1.5 crore and loans of over Rs. 32 lakh were approved in 1949 to improve their capacity and their standards. Out of the amounts promised, over Rs. 90 lakh as grants and Rs. 30 lakh as loans have already

been paid. During the same period, over Rs. 135 lakh have been paid as capital and almost half a crore as recurring grants to the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. As a result of these grants, the Institute is in a position today to undertake post-graduate teaching and research in many of the fundamental branches of science and technology. The Delhi Polytechnic has also been greatly developed and will serve as the Faculty of Technology of the Delhi University.

Last but not least, the Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur, which will impart teaching of the highest standard and provide facilities for research in many of the most important aspects of engineering and technology, was formally opened in August last year. The staff, which has been recruited for the Institute from many countries, includes some of the best experts available in the field. I have no doubt that the establishment of this Institute will be a landmark in the progress of higher technological education and research in the country.

One of the main drawbacks in our system of technical education in the past has been the prevalence of a theoretical bias in many of the courses. In order to remedy this, steps have been taken to give young graduates facilities for practical training in Industry and Government Technical Establishments. Stipends and scholarships at different levels have been created to encourage promising young students to pursue further studies in their respective fields of science and technology.

I should like to take this opportunity of acknowledging gratefully the assistance that we have received through the Unesco Technical Assistance Programme, under which the services of several distinguished technical experts have been made available to us and we have also received the offer of nine scholarships and fellowships for our students and of equipment worth over \$ 100,000. Similarly, under the Colombo Plan, we have received an offer of six mobile cinema vans which will be very useful in our expanding programmes of audio-visual and social education. In addition, a number of our teachers and other educational workers have been given the opportunity to receive training or participate in study tours under the Fullbright and allied schemes. All these are evidences of international co-operation in the field of education which are welcome not only on their own account but also because they help to promote better

international understanding which is so much needed today.

You will see from the report which was submitted to the outgoing Parliament (a copy of which is included in your papers) that activities in other fields of education have also maintained a steady development. I can refer here only to a few of such activities.

In the field of education of the handicapped, as a result of almost ten years' work, a Bharati Braille has been evolved for use throughout the country. A National Centre for the Blind has been set up at Dehra Dun, and we are trying to enlist the assistance of Uno to develop it into an international Centre.

Steps have been taken to encourage the use of various forms of audio-visual aids on an increasing scale for purposes of education. A conference was held last year with an expert from Unesco for planning out a co-ordinated programme of audio-visual education for the country as a whole. Many of the State Governments sent their representatives and a comprehensive programme of development is under preparation.

Another interesting development during the period under review has been the institution of a system of cultural scholarships to help students from different Asian and African countries to study in India. We felt that just as we were sending our students to Europe and America for studies in fields for which facilities do not exist in India, we should, in our turn, offer facilities to students of areas which lack in the facilities that we possess. The scheme also covers persons of Indian origin who have settled in these areas or in British colonies in different parts of the world. A beginning was made with 50 scholarships a year about three years ago. As a result of the success of the scheme, we are planning to increase the number to 100 scholarships a year from the coming financial year.

I must also refer to the expansion of facilities for the education of students belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes. You will remember that up to 1948-49, only about Rs. 3,50,000 were being spent for the purpose. The scheme has expanded rapidly. I am happy to inform you that about Rs. 15 lakh were spent during 1951-52 on scholarships for such students. We propose to expand the scheme further, and a provision of Rs. 17½ lakh has been made in next year's budget. We realise that even this is not adequate but I am sure that you

will agree that to raise the figure from Rs. 3½ to Rs. 17½ lakh in the course of three years is not an inconsiderable achievement and is an earnest of the Government's solicitude for the welfare of these classes. I can also assure you that we intend to add to the amount at the earliest possible opportunity.

The last five years have also seen considerable increase in our international contacts in various fields. India is one of the founder-members of Unesco and has taken an increasingly large share in its manifold activities. The first Unesco Seminar in Asia on Rural Adult Education was held in India during 1949. The first Asian Youth Welfare Seminar was also held here in 1951 in co-operation with the Technical Assistance Administration of the United Nations. We also had in December last the Unesco Symposium on "The Concept of Man and the Philosophy of Education in the East and the West" in which leading thinkers from various countries of the world participated.

Another important scheme which may be mentioned here is the launching of a systematic and co-ordinated five-year plan for the development and propagation of Hindi. You will remember that a conference of all University Vice-Chancellors was convened in 1948 to discuss the question of change in the medium of instruction at the university stage. On the recommendation of that conference and also as a result of consultations with other expert bodies, the Government decided that the transition from English to an Indian language or languages should be spread over a period of years. To promote the objective, a Board of Scientific Terminology in Hindi has been set up with a distinguished personnel for the preparation of a dictionary of basic scientific, administrative and other technical terms. Ten expert special committees in the various fields of science as well as a Committee of Philologists have also been set up for an early execution of these plans. To give secretarial and other assistance to these committees a new Hindi Section has been created in the Ministry. On the non-official level, a central organisation, called the Hindi Shiksha Samiti, has been set up to advise the Ministry on matters relating to the propagation and development of Hindi, especially in the non-Hindi speaking areas.

I have given you a very brief survey of the developments that have taken place in the last five years. This can, however, be best measured if we look at the progressive increase in the funds

allotted to education in our Central and State Budgets. 1947-48 was the year of partition. Figures for that year are not complete or fully reliable. But in 1946-47, *i.e.* the year immediately preceding Partition, all the present "A" States and the then Centrally Administered Areas together did not spend even Rs. 20.5 crore on education from the Government funds. The Central budget for the year was considerably less than Rs. 2 crore. As opposed to this, the Budget for 1951-52 for the "A" States and the same for Centrally Administered Areas amounts to about Rs. 47 crore. The Budget of the Ministry of Education has also been raised to about Rs. 6 crore and we are planning for further expansion in the future.

I must not, however, tire your patience by going into details about the various other activities of the Ministry in this period. Even the brief survey I have made will indicate to you that in spite of serious handicaps, progress has been maintained in all departments. While we can take legitimate pride in what has been done in the face of tremendous difficulties, no one is more conscious than myself of the fact that much yet remains to be done. I will not claim that the edifice of our system of national education has been built but I will claim that with due regard to the limitations set by the financial and other difficulties that we have had to face, the work that has already been accomplished is not inconsiderable and compares quite favourably with what was being done before 1947.

Our resources, both material and human, are limited. If therefore we are to use them to the best possible advantage, we must have a clear picture in our mind of the order of priorities. In framing a national plan, we must therefore allot to education the important position which it deserves. I consider that the planning of education on a national scale is perhaps even more important than national planning in economic and industrial development. Economic and industrial development creates material goods. These can be used by people in different parts whatever be their source or origin. Education, on the other hand, trains the citizens, and if this training fails to inculcate the right attitudes and ideals or encourages fissiparous tendencies, the security and welfare of the community is at stake. Our reconstruction of national education must therefore aim at creating a unity of purpose among all our nationals and developing in them

a common outlook which will transcend and harmonise in an attractive pattern the differences in history, background, language and culture that exist among various sections of the people.

I am happy that a National Planning Commission has been set up to ensure that our material and human resources are put to the best use in the development of the country. Such a commission can indicate the objectives and prepare the blue-prints but the fulfilment of the programme will depend upon the quality and character of our people. This quality and character can be improved only through a system of creative education in which all individuals are given the opportunity of developing their capacities to the fullest extent. I feel that national planning must therefore aim not merely at the utilisation of our existing resources but at the creation of a new type of mind. We want in the India of the future men and women of vision, courage and honesty of purpose who will be able to play their part worthily in every field of national activity.

This is what makes creative education so important for the future welfare of the nation. What is needed is not only an expansion in the facilities but also an improvement in the quality of education. This would mean an immense educational effort which unfortunately we cannot carry out on a nation-wide scale for lack of adequate finances. We must, however, do all we can to raise the standard of teaching and transform the educational ideology of our institutions at all levels. We can work out pilot projects on these lines in selected areas in each State. The Planning Commission has, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, recommended the adoption of such a selective approach through the organisation of community projects which aim at the development of improved methods and techniques in the fields of primary, basic, secondary and teachers' education. Well-planned and systematic work on these lines is imperative. Unless the younger generations develop the necessary ability, character and idealism, all the schemes that we are preparing for the progress of the country will remain only paper projects. I am therefore convinced that one of the main tasks before us in the next five years is the development of our education in a way which will give us the citizens we need for the creation of a better and happier India.

## ROADS AND PROSPERITY

India attained her independence and formed her first national government in a situation of unparalleled difficulty and hardship. The aftermath of the partition made demands which could not be met without straining all our material and spiritual resources. The result was that, in spite of our best wishes, we could not take up the work of nation-building on a scale and with the rapidity that was necessary. In spite of these difficulties and obstacles we can, however, look back with satisfaction on the beginnings made in almost all fields of national reconstruction and welfare activity.

When we look back on what has been done during the last five years, one field which deserves special mention is that of the development of facilities of scientific research in the country. It is true that the Council of Industrial and Scientific Research was established in 1942, but its activities were concerned mainly with the increase of the country's war potential. It is after the formation of the National Government that its activities have been expanded to cover all aspects of national life and progress made at a pace that would reflect credit on any government. In the brief course of the last four years, not only have the activities of the Council expanded but a new Department of Scientific Research has also been set up by the Government. This Department has now reached a stage where it has become a full-fledged Ministry. I have no hesitation, Mr. Prime Minister, in saying that this remarkable progress is due entirely to your leadership and inspiration. In spite of all your pre-occupations as Prime Minister in a most difficult time, you undertook direct responsibility for the Department of Scientific Research and all its work was done under your personal guidance. The foundations you have laid in these four years will, I am sure, lead to the erection of one of the most valuable monuments of our national endeavour.

It is hardly necessary for me to stress the importance of road research in India. We have only 0.22 miles of roads per square



mile, and out of this only about 1/3rd is fit for motor traffic. It is obvious that without adequate communications, we cannot develop our agriculture, industry and commerce. There is today a great demand and need for increasing agricultural production. Without proper communications we cannot bring to the villages the necessary equipment, manures and scientific and technical know-how. Nor can we easily move from the village the grains that may be needed elsewhere. In this age of mechanical transport, our weakness in the field can be gauged from the fact that India had, in 1950, not even three lakh motor vehicles as against forty-four lakhs in the U.K., and almost five crore in the United States.

The Chief Engineers' Conference at Nagpur had recommended in December 1943 the construction or improvement of about 4,00,000 miles of roads. As we have at present only a little over 2.5 lakh miles of roads of all types, this may at first sight appear to be a gigantic programme. Even this is not, however, fully adequate to our needs. India with an area of over 11 lakh square miles has only 2,55,460 miles of road; as against this, the U.K., with only 94,000 square miles, has 1,84,000 miles of road. The figures for the U.S.A. are 30 lakh miles of road for an area of 30 lakh square miles. How unsatisfactory the position is can be seen even more clearly if we take the road miles per thousand of population. India has for every thousand of the population not even six furlongs of road as against 3.6 miles in the U.K. and about 21 miles in the U.S.A. If therefore we are to have a satisfactory system of roads, various problems connected with the construction, maintenance and vehicular use of roads at minimum cost must be carefully studied. Special attention will have to be paid to the needs of rural areas. The establishment of the Central Road Research Institute in this country is therefore a matter of national importance.

The problem of construction, maintenance and improvement of low-cost roads are manifold. It will be the main function of the Institute to find solutions to all such problems, with special attention to the following :

- (1) the fostering and promotion of road research in general;
- (2) fundamental and applied research on road materials, construction and maintenance ;
- (3) the testing and standardisation of specifications ;

- (4) the devising of suitable instruments for various tests on roads ;
- (5) the study of soil mechanics and the carrying out of tests on soils for the development of all-weather village roads ;
- (6) the study of the characteristics and behaviour of different types of roads under different traffic conditions ;
- (7) the incidence of accidents, road statistics and the evolving of road safety devices ;
- (8) the organisation of co-operative research schemes with the assistance of engineering colleges, other research institutions and industrial concerns doing similar work and the tendering of technical advice and assistance where sought ; and
- (9) the dissemination of results of research and training of technologists.

The scope of work includes research and investigation, the designing, construction, maintenance and improvement of roads and all other aspects connected with road engineering.

To ensure progress in all these aspects, the work of the Institute will be organised in the following divisions :

- (1) Soils,
- (2) Flexible Pavements (Bituminous Roads),
- (3) Rigid Pavements (Concrete Roads),
- (4) Roads, and
- (5) Traffic Engineering and Economic Research.

This brief account will make it clear that the Central Road Research Institute has been generously conceived and will, we hope, contribute greatly to the improvement of our roadways. Until now, the work done in the field of road research has been sporadic and scanty. On account of the stereotyped methods of road construction and maintenance, the condition of roads in India has remained poor. This has not only retarded the development of transport and communication but imposed heavy burdens on the exchequer.

During the four years that the Department of Scientific Research has been in existence, it has, among other things, planned and established a chain of National laboratories. The Central Road Research Institute is one of the eleven laboratories so planned. The foundation-stone of the Institute was laid by the

Minister for Transport on September 6, 1950. Even before the main buildings of the Institute were complete, research work was started in September 1950. The construction of the main buildings started only in February 1951 and I must congratulate Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar, the Director of the Council, and the workers of the Institute for the expedition with which the task has been accomplished.

## TENSIONS AND GANDHIAN OUTLOOK

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this Seminar to discuss the contribution of Gandhian outlook and techniques to the solution of tensions between and within nations. I am particularly happy that so many distinguished men and women from so many countries have responded to our invitation. The subject for their deliberations is one which is of overriding importance in the modern world and immediately concerns all individuals of all nations.

When the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco met for the first time in 1949, it resolved that steps should be taken at an early date to consider the Gandhian doctrines and their relevance to the problem of achieving world peace. Unesco which is concerned with the creation of an international outlook and the promotion of friendly feelings between different nations was naturally greatly interested in the proposal. Since then we have been considering how best to give effect to our plans of examining Gandhian methods as a means of achieving peace. You will agree that it was hardly necessary to have a Seminar only in order to draw attention to Gandhiji's thought. His ideas have been before the world for many years and are already a part of the intellectual heritage of modern man. In view, however, of the crisis which threatens the world today and the danger of war which is always in the background of our minds, it seems specially appropriate to consider Gandhiji's methods so far as they provide an alternative to war and promise a solution to international problems. That is why after much hesitation and thought, we have decided to call this Seminar to give distinguished thinkers of the East and the West an opportunity to discuss Gandhiji's methods in all their implications.

I am keenly conscious of the stupendous nature of the problem and also of how a solution has until now baffled the efforts of

---

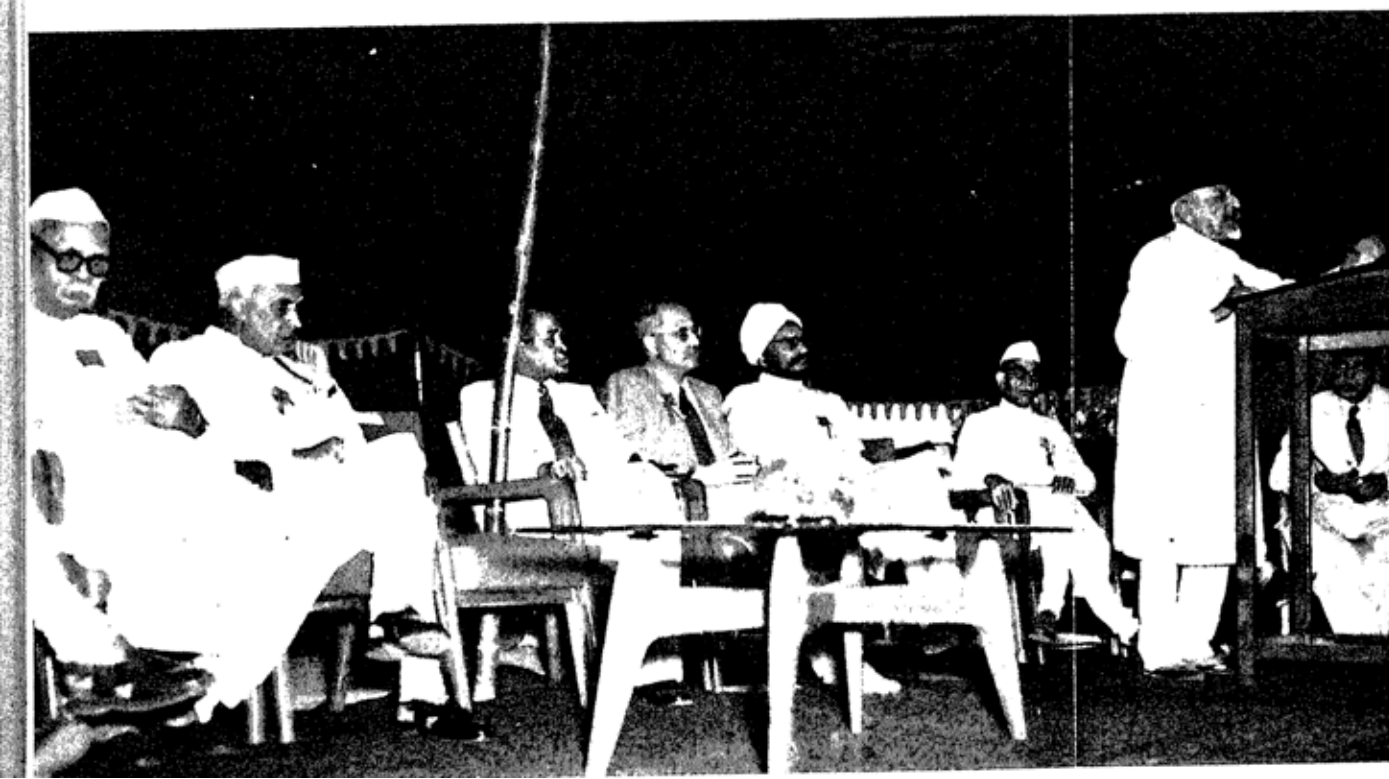
*Speech at the inaugural session of the Seminar on the Contribution of Gandhian Outlook and Techniques to the Solution of Tensions Between and Within Nations, New Delhi, January 5, 1953*



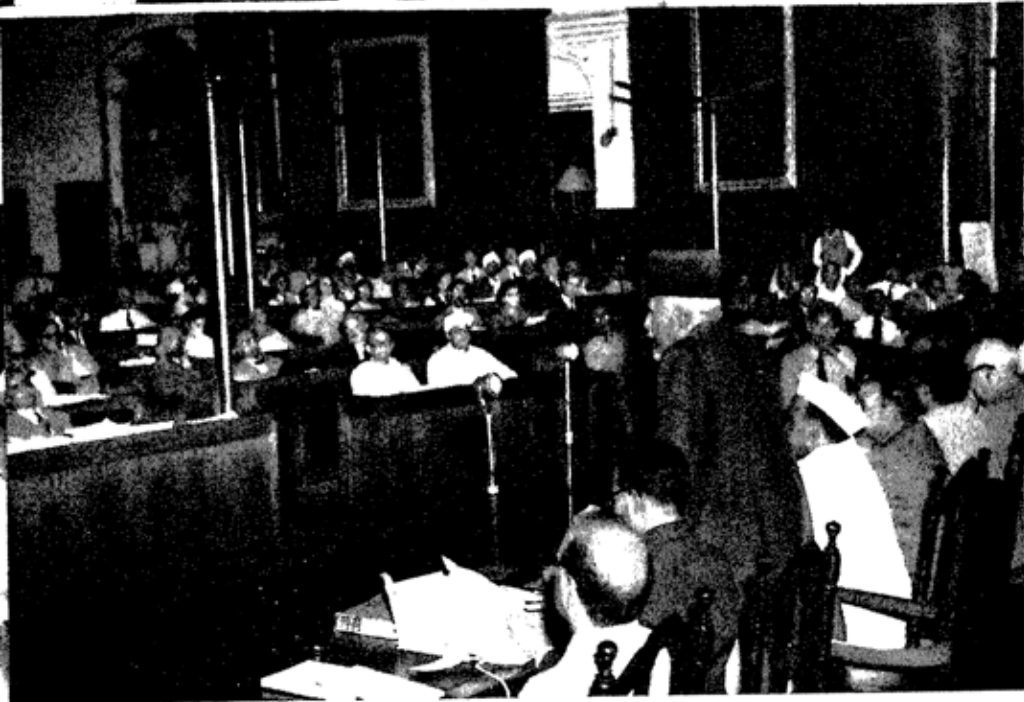
*Presiding over the Seminar on the 'Contribution of Gandhian Outlook and Techniques to the Solution of National and International Tensions', January 1953. Sri Jawaharlal Nehru is delivering the inaugural address*



*Above : Performing the opening ceremony of the Central Building Research Institute at Roorkee, April 1953*



*Below : Delivering the inaugural address at the Conference of the State Education Ministers and Vice-Chancellors of the Universities, New Delhi, April 1953*



*Above : Performing the opening ceremony of the new building of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, New Delhi, January 1953*

*Below : Delivering the inaugural address at the 20th Annual Meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, November 1953*

man. It is therefore in a spirit of humility that we have organised this Seminar in the hope that the co-operative efforts of thinkers from so many countries may throw some light on our pressing problems and suggest some method of dealing more satisfactorily with the problems of war and peace. The issues at stake are so vast and our aim so important that, whether we fully succeed or not, the effort is its own justification.

The progress of science itself makes it the more urgent to find a solution to these problems. In the past, wars were often due to the fact that man's lack of knowledge did not permit him to utilise to the full the resources of nature. One nation or group could therefore satisfy its needs only by depriving others. If food or fodder was scarce, the only means of overcoming this shortage lay in forcible occupation of the fields or pastures/belonging to others. Today, the progress of science has created conditions where all legitimate demands of man can be satisfied. We can now live in an economy of plenty rather than one of want. Secrets of nature have been revealed one after the other and those have made available to man the immense wealth of her hidden resources. The tragedy of the situation, however, is that this increase of knowledge and mastery over nature is being used not so much/for the constructive purposes of society as to enhance man's powers of destruction. The energy of the atom has been unlocked and this can bring within the reach of all comfort and plenty. We are, however, concentrating on the use of atomic energy mainly to create terrible engines of destruction. Wireless has brought all mankind nearer to one another, but instead of using it to strengthen the bonds of fellowship among men, we are using it as an aid to/a propaganda of hatred and discord. Aeroplanes are being used primarily to develop our offensive in aerial warfare. Greater knowledge of germs and bacteria promises mastery over disease and suffering, but such knowledge is often being sought to develop their use as weapons in bacteriological war. Not that these discoveries have no beneficent use, but such use seems subsidiary to the main purpose of employing them as weapons for the destruction of humanity.

Since the beginning of this century/technological and scientific developments have tended to make war and peace co-extensive with the whole world. In the past, some problems may have been solved by war. In any case such wars were confined to a section



of the world. Today, it is clear that no problem can be solved by war. If an attempt is made to solve any problems by means of war, the consequences extend beyond the frontiers of the nations concerned and involve all mankind. Wars have reached a stage where they only succeed in intensifying the hatred between nations and leading to new hatreds. Thus, the only consequence of war today is to enhance the impulse to revenge and retribution. Forces are released that make each war a prelude to further and more devastating wars.

This becomes clear if we consider the sequence of events since World War I. Originally the conflict arose between Germany, Austria and Russia but very soon France and the United Kingdom were embroiled. More nations joined till it became a world war which ended in the defeat of Germany. The victorious nations met at Versailles and drew up a plan of peace. President Wilson enunciated his famous Fourteen Points which aimed at bringing into being a world which would be free from the threat of war. He proclaimed the doctrine of the right of self-determination of nations. Eventually, however, a Peace Treaty was signed which was based not on the Fourteen Points but on a desire to impose the severest penalty on Germany. Certain sections of the German people were separated from the Reich and such heavy reparations imposed on it that the very basis of its economic life was shaken. The responsibility of World War II is generally laid on Hitler and the Nazi Party, but if we ask who created Hitler, we have to recognise that it was the Treaty of Versailles. In fact, we may say that the signing of the Treaty was the moment of Hitler's birth.

The Peace Treaty made every German feel his humiliation and helplessness. The Weimar Republic tried by negotiations to lighten the burden on the Germans so that democracy might have a chance in Germany but the U.K. and France paid little heed to her appeals. In fact, the victorious Allies characterised all German attempts to reduce reparations as attempts at black-mail. I cannot refrain from referring to the Lausanne Conference which met shortly before the rise of Hitler. On that occasion, Germany proposed measures for the removal of causes of misunderstanding and conflict between herself and France and was prepared even to have Joint Chiefs of Staff for the two armies so that they could always work together. This would have removed

permanently French fears of German aggression and German fears of French military might. It is obvious today that there could have been no better solution of the long standing Franco-German conflict. If this proposal had been put into effect, World War II might well have been avoided. The proposal was, however, rejected. It is a strange irony of history that Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, who had been one of the foremost pacifists during World War I, should have been mainly responsible for its rejection. Would it be uncharitable to suggest that the reason why he opposed the German proposals was that such close collaboration between France and Germany would reduce the importance and power of the U.K. ? It seems that while the U.K. wanted peace between France and Germany, she did not want such close friendship as was envisaged at Lausanne.

Germany became more and more embittered and frustrated and sought a leader who could cater for this mood. Hitler's rise to power thus became inevitable even though his party was in a minority in the country as a whole. World War II was therefore nothing but a release of the hatreds that had been generated in Germany, consequent upon of the Treaty of Versailles. While Germany was powerless, the Allies dealt with her claims, not from the point of view of justice but of their own military might. In 1939, when Germany regained her power, she also based her claims, not on justice but on might. It is not easy to decide in favour of either protagonist. Both were tarred with the same brush of hatred and vendetta. Both adopted in the day of their power the law of the jungle rather than the law of reason.

Like World War I, World War II also ended in the defeat of Germany. Perhaps her defeat would have come earlier if the Allies had not insisted on unconditional surrender. As early as 1942, a group had been formed in Germany who wanted to end Hitler's power. Faced with the Allies' demand of unconditional surrender, they were compelled to stay their hand and aid Hitler in carrying on the struggle as long as possible. During World War I, there was a demand that the Kaiser should be tried as a war criminal and hanged. Though this was not done, the trials at Nuremberg were held after the conclusion of World War II. This was in accordance with a statute of the victorious nations to set up a tribunal to try the German leaders.

The question may very well be asked : what authority other

than sheer military might allowed this tribunal to brand as war criminals the German leaders who had been responsible for the war? It was a manifestation of the same spirit which led the Allies to frame and enforce the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler and his associates were guilty first and foremost before the German nation. If anybody had the moral authority to punish them, it was the German nation and the German courts. After the war, German courts condemned hundreds of Germans as Nazis. Why then were the accused at Nuremburg not tried by the same German courts? There is no doubt that Goering, Ribbentrop and Himmler were guilty of heinous crimes against humanity but the question is, who had the right to punish them? When the Pharisees put a question to Christ about the punishment of the adulteress, Christ said that only he who was free from guilt had the right to cast the first stone.

It is difficult to say what the definition of a war crime is. When the German bombers raided the United Kingdom, the civilised world was horrified by the indiscriminate attack on the civilians. When, however, the Allied Powers started their bombing raids, they did not spare the civilian population of Germany either. If the inventors of V2 were war criminals, cannot those who were responsible for dropping atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki also lay claim to the title? Since the beginning of history, conquerors have generally killed only those who took up arms against them. Cyrus formulated this as an explicit principle five hundred years before Christ. Tyrants have no doubt destroyed and pillaged cities from time to time and they have been regarded as enemies of man. The use of a weapon to destroy a whole city, containing thousands of innocent and unarmed men, women and children, is therefore an act that must be condemned as a crime against humanity. During the present war in Korea, there have been accusations and denials about germ warfare. The world is not in a position to give a final verdict on these charges but papers are full of accounts of experiments about germ and bacteriological warfare. We also read of the extermination of whole groups of people for the crime of belonging to a particular class or community. In such a world, how can we brand any particular group as the only war criminals?

World War I laid the foundations of World War II. The Second World War is now creating conditions for a third world

war. Who can say where this process of destruction will lead mankind? Such senseless destruction seems even more futile when we remember how at the end of each war the conqueror and the conquered alike have to pay the price of victory. After World War I, circumstances compelled the Allies to recognise step by step the need to rebuild Germany in order to restore the health of European economy. After World War II, we are again witnessing fervent efforts of the victorious nations to rebuild Germany. All these are evidence that so long as we adopt the way of hatred and revenge, there is no solution except the creation of new and more bitter problems. If the world is to survive, we must therefore find solution other than by a war.

It was in order to find a method of settling international disputes in a peaceful manner that at first the League of Nations and now the United Nations have been established. There is no doubt that their establishment is a step in the right direction, but equally there is no doubt that they have not been able to fulfil the hopes they had aroused. The League petered out because it failed to stand up to the aggression of the great powers. Today, we are witnessing the United Nations fumbling whenever the interests of the great nations are at stake. Nevertheless, Uno represents the only hope of mankind, and it is therefore our duty to find out what its shortcomings are and how best to remedy them.

It seems clear to me that two conditions must be fulfilled if Uno is to achieve its objective. The first is the recognition of justice as a value with the same validity in the international sphere as within national life. Individuals in a State have, through a long process, learnt to curb their impulse to private vengeance and submit to the arbitration of neutral judges appointed by the State. If an individual seeks to wreak private vengeance, he is punished even though he may have acted under grave provocation. We must learn to apply the same principle in the international sphere and lay down that the individual nation, society or State must never be the judge in its own case.

The second condition is clearly linked with the first and in fact arises out of it. Social peace became possible only when individuals gave up the right of private action and agreed to abide by the dictates of the State. International peace can be achieved

only if States are prepared to recognise limits to their national sovereignty and submit to the arbitration of an international body. The position today is that States advocate arbitration on all issues which concern others but refuse to recognise the validity of neutral arbitration as soon as their own interests are touched.

If these two conditions are fulfilled, we may hope to find a way out of the greatest danger which threatens the world today. This is the prevailing cold war between the Communist and the non-Communist countries. Whatever may be our personal attitude to Communism, we must recognise the fact that it counts a large section of mankind as its adherent. We must also admit the right of these people to their own way of life, provided they choose it freely and do not seek to interfere with the way of life of others. Once the two blocks develop an attitude of toleration for each other, discussions on specific issues will no longer be barren and disappointing as they are today. This will also make each block realise that other nations must be free to choose their own way of life according to their national genius.

To recognise justice as an absolute value is to substitute right in the place of might. This also implies that ends can never justify means. It was a basic principle of Gandhiji's thought that not only must we aim at truth and justice but must also adopt means that are truthful and just. There is therefore no option before the world today but to turn to Gandhiji's doctrine and methods if we are to escape disaster. He preached that violence and hatred solved no problems and could only lead to further misery. He therefore appealed to men to settle their differences in the light of reason and justice. He held that the only victories were those based on moral principles. The lessons of history confirm his teachings, for history is full of the record of conflicts which seemed to end in victory but were only the prelude to further conflicts and, as often as not, ended in bitter defeat.

In essence, Gandhiji's message is not a new one. It is a message which India gave to the world six hundred years before the birth of Christ through Gautama Buddha. This was also the message which Jesus gave to the world on the Mount of Olives. Jesus, it is often said, was the first and the last Christian. This, however, does not seem to be fully correct. If we look at the history of the Christian Church, we find that it survived the persecution of the Roman Empire and in fact triumphed over it, not by the use of

force and violence but by its readiness to suffer persecution and even death for the sake of its ideals. Even when these early Christians had become powerful, they refrained from the use of power. Tertullian gave expression to this attitude in his speech for the defence of the Christians against the accusations of the Gentiles. In an address to the Magistrates he said, "Our origin is but recent, yet already we fill all that your power acknowledges—cities, fortresses, islands, provinces, the assemblies of the people, the wards of Rome, the palace, the senate, the public places and especially the armies. We have left you nothing but your temples. Reflect what wars we are able to undertake. With what promptitude might we not arm ourselves, were we not restrained by our religion, which teaches us that it is better to be killed than to kill?"

Islam appeared on the scene six hundred years after the advent of Christ. When the Prophet of Islam started his mission in Mecca, the whole country rose in determined opposition and sought to suppress his preachings through violence. The persecution became so bitter that it was impossible for him and his followers to continue at Mecca and ultimately he had to repair to Medina. A section of the people of Medina extended their support to him, but the Quraish of Mecca would not allow him to remain in peace even there. They organised a campaign and launched a violent attack against him. The Prophet was thus compelled to raise the sword in self-defence. He no doubt took recourse to arms but the spirit in which he did so is without parallel in the history of warfare. The Prophet of Islam was compelled to take to the sword but there was no hatred or desire for vengeance in his military operations. Even in the midst of the conflict, when he and his people were violently assailed and he himself had suffered physical injury, he could still say, "My Lord! lead my people along the path of righteousness, for they know not what they are doing."

Can the faintest suggestion of hatred, ill-will and revenge attach to a spirit which even in a situation like this could give vent to such noble sentiments?

Then the day came when he returned victorious to Mecca at the head of thousands of faithful followers. This was an occasion when he could have taken revenge for their past oppression and persecution. No such thought occurred to him for even a single

moment. He forgave without any mental reservation all those who for ten years had helped every conceivable type of persecution on him and his comrades. He declared, "I shall deal with you today in the same manner as Joseph dealt with his persecuting brothers." When they were brought before Joseph in Egypt, he had said, "Today is not a day of judgment for you. May God forgive you and forgiveness is indeed without measure."

In more recent times, we have seen Tolstoy deliver the same message of opposing evil by good, though he had no opportunity of putting his theory to the test.

Gandhiji's greatness lies in this that he propounded non-violence not as a mere theoretical idea but as a practical programme. In fact, his life was a shining example of this principle and that is why he was able to convert large masses of men to his way of thinking. In doing so, Gandhiji at the same time offered to the world a moral substitute for war. Until his time, even thinkers who had recognised the futility of war could offer no substitute for it. In his programme of non-violent non-cooperation, Gandhiji showed a way in which wrong could be opposed without resorting to arms. This is not an easy way and we do not yet see clearly how the method can be applied in the settlement of all international disputes. Since, however, there is no other alternative, if mankind is to survive, we must find a way of extending its application to all fields of conflict.

Beginning from 1920 up to the last days of his life, I have had the privilege of seeing Gandhiji at very close quarters and have in fact been one of his associates. The thing which impressed me most during all this long and close association was his unflinching faith in non-violence. Non-violence was for him an absolute value and he regarded it as the ultimate truth. Two instances come to my mind of how uncompromising his stand was on this issue. When World War II started, his heart was heavy with the suffering of afflicted nations. His anguish was the greater that he could not share in their misery or do anything to stop the holocaust. His sense of misery came to a head during the heavy air bombing of Great Britain and he brooded over it till he came to the decision that he must do whatever lay in his power to bring the war to an end. He therefore wanted to send a message to the British people advising them to refrain from the use of arms and instead oppose Hitler non-violently. Even if this resulted in the military

occupation of Great Britain, he wanted to advise the British people to refuse to surrender to Hitler and oppose his violence by non-violent non-co-operation.

I pleaded with him that this was hardly an appropriate message to the British people in the hour of their trial and it was likely to be misunderstood. He withheld his message for two days but then told me that he had pondered deeply over the matter and it was his conviction that he must give out his mind whatever be the consequences. Accordingly, he drafted his message and sent to the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

A second occasion arose during the war over the issue of Indian independence. Gandhiji held that if the British made an offer of independence on the condition that India should join the war, he for one would reject the offer. He believed that non-violence was an absolute value and he would not be justified in compromising on this issue even for the sake of Indian freedom. As the President of the Indian National Congress at the time, I could not agree with him. It was my view that the Allies were fighting for a just cause and the only thing that prevented us from participating in the struggle was British domination over India. If this was withdrawn, India would have no reason to withhold her help to the democratic powers that were opposing Nazi aggression. These two instances show how complete his acceptance of the principle of non-violence was. He was not prepared to deviate from non-violence even for the sake of national freedom.

In this Seminar we are not, however, considering non-violence as an absolute value nor pacifism as a creed which allows no exception. We recognise that in certain circumstances a limited use of force may be necessary in order to prevent violence. If we take an example from civil life, the power of police in a State is the guarantee of the suppression of lawlessness and disorder. Our aim therefore should be to find out how this principle can be applied in the relations between nations so that war may be eliminated as an instrument of policy. International conflicts are often the result of internal conflicts. We have therefore to consider the application of Gandhian methods and outlook for the solution of both types of tensions.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome once again the distinguished thinkers from the East and the West who have met to



consider this problem and suggest practical measures to give effect to them.

It is a matter of regret that we have today among us no representative from either the U.S.S.R. or China. The responsibility for this is not ours as we made repeated attempts to associate thinkers from these countries in the work of the Seminar. In view of the many international peace conferences that these two States have been sponsoring in recent years, I would have expected that they would welcome this opportunity of meeting thinkers from the other regions of the world for promoting international peace. It is therefore a matter of regret and surprise that our invitations have not met with the response that we had a right to expect.

## THE ROLE OF DANCE, DRAMA AND MUSIC

Of the many questions that pressed for immediate attention after the achievement of independence, one of the most important was that relating to the revival of cultural activities. During the last 150 years, the fine arts, whether dance or drama, music or literature, did not receive the attention or the support they needed from the State for their full development. It is true that there has been a renaissance in India since the middle of the 19th century, but this was due to the release of new forces in society and owed little to the State. That is why, it was not as extensive or deep as it would have been if it had received the necessary State support. After the fall of the Moghul Empire, the centuries old tradition of State encouragement to different forms of fine arts was almost completely withdrawn.

The Indian States, which constituted about a third of India, have, no doubt, in their own territories played a significant role in supporting and developing these arts and thus deserve our gratitude, but their effort was not commensurate with the requirements of the situation. In any case, with the disappearance of the princely order, the patronage which they extended to the fine arts is also no longer available. In a democratic regime, the arts can derive their sustenance only from the people, and the State, as the organised manifestation of the people's will, must therefore undertake its maintenance and development as one of its first responsibilities.

Enlightened public opinion in the country has been conscious of this fact for over a decade. On January 26, 1945, a specific proposal in this behalf was put forward by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The Society moved for the establishment of a National Cultural Trust as an autonomous body entrusted with the task of stimulating and promoting the culture of the country in all its aspects. The Trust was to consist of three academies, viz., an Academy of Letters to deal with Indian languages, literature,

*Welcome address at the inauguration of the Indian Academy of Dance, Drama and Music, New Delhi, January 28, 1953*

philosophy and history; an Academy of Art (including graphic, plastic and applied art) and Architecture, and an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music. It was intended that these academies should aim at maintaining and improving the standards of achievement in all these fields of culture.

The proposal was referred to the Central Advisory Board of Education which after examination by one of its committees accepted it and recommended that the Central Government should contribute half the amount while the Provincial Governments and the Indian States should contribute the balance. Owing to financial and other difficulties it was not possible for the Government to bring into existence the Cultural Trust though it had in principle agreed to do so.

Meanwhile the country attained its independence. The changed circumstances required fresh consideration of the issue. Accordingly, a Conference on Art was held in Calcutta in August 1949, followed by two more in March 1951 at New Delhi, on Letters, and on Dance, Drama, Music and Art to consider the position and advise the Government on measures for the promotion of cultural development in the country. These conferences appointed committees which after examining the various aspects of the problem recommended the establishment of three academies, viz., an Academy for Dance, Drama and Music, an Academy of Letters, and an Academy of Art. We have met today for the inauguration of the first of these academies.

A brief enumeration of the functions of the Academy will give you an idea of what we expect it to do. Some important functions are :

- (i) to promote research in the field of Indian dance, drama and music and for this purpose to establish a library and a museum ;
- (ii) to encourage the exchange of ideas and enrichment of techniques between the different regions in regard to the arts of dance, drama and music ;
- (iii) to encourage, where necessary, the establishment of theatre centres, on the basis of regional languages, and co-operation among different theatre centres ;
- (iv) to encourage the setting up of institutions providing training in the art of theatre, including instruction in the actor's training, study of stagecraft and the production of plays ;

- (v) to publish literature on Indian dance, drama and music, including reference works such as an illustrated dictionary or handbook of technical terms ;
- (vi) to encourage the development of amateur dramatic activity, the children's theatre, the open air theatre and the rural theatre in its various forms;
- (vii) to revive and preserve folk dance and folk music in different regions of the country and to encourage the development of community music, martial music, etc.
- (viii) to sponsor dance, drama and music festivals on an all-India basis, and to encourage regional festivals;
- (ix) to award prizes and distinctions and to give recognition to individual artists for outstanding achievements in the fields of dance, drama and music; and
- (x) to promote cultural exchanges in the field of dance, drama and music with other countries.

Since the Central Government would bear the main burden of financing the Academy, it was considered appropriate, at least in the initial stages, to leave the choice of the Chairman and the Treasurer to the President and the Government of India. The Academy will, however, be autonomous in its internal working and will include in its membership representatives of the State Governments and of important arts organisations as well as distinguished artists in their personal capacity. A provision has also been made for the amendment of its constitution as and when desired by the Academy. Specially noteworthy is the institution of the office of Fellows of the Academy; election must be almost unanimous and the total number will be strictly limited so that it will be a real honour—the greatest in the country—to be a Fellow of the Academy.

India can be proud of a long heritage and tradition in the field of dance, drama and music. In the field of fine arts, as in those of philosophy and science, India and Greece occupy an almost unique position in human history. It is my conviction that in the field of music, the achievement of India is greater than that of even Greece. The breadth and depth of Indian music is perhaps unrivalled as is its integration of vocal and instrumental music.

The essence of Indian civilisation and culture has always been a spirit of assimilation and synthesis. Nowhere is this more clearly shown than in the field of music. The amalgamation of Persian

and Classical Indian styles during the Middle Ages gave rise to a type of music which combines the excellences of both. When the Muslims came to India, Persian music was already a fully developed system but it did not take Muslims long to discover the special merits of Indian music. They not only adopted it as their own but added to it richly by adapting elements from the Persian tradition. Since then there has been no separate development of the two systems, but within India a combined stream has grown which, in richness and splendour, surpasses both the original tributaries.

Amir Khusro is a well-known name to every student of Indian history. He was a great poet but his inventive genius has left its mark on other fields of the fine arts as well. In music, he has created new forms through the combination of Indian and Persian melodies. *Aiman*, *Tarana*, *Qol*, *Sazgri*, and *Suhla* and other tunes, which are sung to this day by millions of Indians, are a living testimony to his genius and his power of synthesis. In the field of instrumental music, it was he who invented the *Sitar*. He found the *Veena* too elaborate and complicated an instrument and simplified it by reducing the number of strings to only three. The name *Sitar*, which in Persian means three strings, still bears testimony to this fact.

The same process of simplification and development is found in the field of vocal music. Sultan Husain Sharqy, King of Jaunpur, was a great lover of music, and it was he who introduced the *Khayal* style in Indian music. The old classical style of *Dhrupad* was too difficult and rigid for the fluent expression of emotions. In *Khayal*, he perfected a style which has the dignity of the *Dhrupad* without its rigidity and has become one of the most cherished forms of Indian music.

We find the same spirit of assimilation and synthesis in the evolution of the various musical instruments of India. There were *Tanpuras* of various types which were popular in Iran, and India adopted and adapted them to suit her own requirements. Another Persian instrument, *Qanun*, is played even to this day by the people of Kashmir. There is therefore no better example of the composite culture of India than in the field of music. The co-operation of Hindus and Muslims for almost a thousand years has here brought about a consummation that has perhaps no equal in the world.

We do not know the full history of the development of drama. New researches into Egyptology for the last 50 years indicate that drama was popular in Egypt thousands of years before the advent of Christ. If we are to accept Breasted's theory, it would appear that the Memphite drama was well developed as early as the fourth millennium before Christ. In 800 B.C., the tradition was revived under the orders of Shakaba, the Ethiopian Pharaoh, and a small fragment of a play survives to this day. In Babylon and Nineveh also religious festivals were accompanied by drama. All these indicate that, as in the fields of science and philosophy, Greece received inspiration as well as models from the earlier traditions of Egypt.

There is no doubt that whatever might be the source from which the Greeks derived their inspiration, they developed drama and brought it to a level that is still unsurpassed. Comparisons in such fields are invidious, but we can still say that Kalidasa may be compared with the greatest among the Greek dramatists. We have also the works of Bhasa, Bhavabhuti and Banbhattacha who raised the Indian drama to a level which is perhaps not inferior to that attained by the Greeks. In the field of the theory of drama, Indian achievements are perhaps still more remarkable and serve as models even to this day.

In the field of dance, the great variety of Indian styles has attracted the notice of all students of arts and culture. The range of Indian dance extends from the strictly classical styles, developed in the temples with their infinite variety of expression and modulations, to the wonderful rhythm and flow of folk dances in different regions of the land. In their variety they present a richness of forms that have few parallels elsewhere in the world. What is most remarkable is the continuity of these traditions and the vigour they display to this day.

This precious heritage of dance, drama and music is one which we must cherish and develop. We must do so not only for our own sake but also as our contribution to the cultural heritage of mankind. Nowhere is it truer than in the field of art, that to sustain means to create. Traditions cannot be preserved but can only be created afresh. It will be the aim of these academies to preserve our traditions by offering them an institutional form.

The Academy of Dance, Drama and Music is the first of our

three proposed academies and I am happy that the President has kindly agreed to inaugurate it. I have now great pleasure in inviting him to do so.

## A NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR INDIA

When the Council of the National Library invited me to open it formally in its new home, my mind naturally went back to my first contact with it some 48 years ago. This was in 1904 when I was a boy of about 16. I had completed my studies, and according to the prevailing practice in our traditional system of education, was lecturing to a group of students on various subjects. I came to hear that the Buhar collection of the Library contained a rare copy of Al Beruni's famous work—*Al Qanun*. Accompanied by a friend, Mirza Fazal-ud-Din Ahmad, who later published my book, *Taskara*, I went to the Library. It was, as you no doubt remember, then known as the Imperial Library and was housed in Metcalf Hall. It was necessary to secure a reader's permit and Mirza Fazal-ud-Din was given one without any comment. When, however, he asked for a pass for me, the Library Assistant looked at me intently and enquired about my age. I said, I was about 16. On hearing this, he refused to give me a permit as he said no one below 18 was allowed to be a reader of the Library. Mirza Fazal-ud-Din interceded on my behalf and said that whatever my age was I was already a Professor in Logic, Philosophy and Muslim Law. I should therefore be given the facility to use the Library, if need be by making an exception to the rule. I looked at the Library Assistant and felt that he was not inclined to believe the statement. Mirza Fazal-ud-Din tried to see the Librarian but unfortunately he was not available. My first effort to gain admission to the Library thus ended in failure and I returned home in disappointment.

Some years later, when one of my personal friends, a great scholar, Harinath Dey, became Librarian, the entire wealth of the Library became available to me and I burrowed among its treasures. I do not know to this day whether I violated any rules, but I must confess that often I took home with me not only rare books but also precious manuscripts which I kept till I had an opportunity of copying them.

*Address at the opening of the National Library, Belvedere, Alipore, February 1, 1953*



I am glad that it should be my privilege today to throw open to all who wish to use it, the doors of a library which were closed to me 48 years ago.

Now that the National Library has found a permanent home in this palace after its sojourn in various more or less ill-suited houses, I cannot help recalling to your mind the memory of the man who laid the first foundation of its future greatness. Lord Curzon has the same place in the history of the British Viceroys as has Lord Dalhousie in the history of the Governor-Generals of the East India Company. One created the situation which led to the great outburst of 1857. The other pursued a policy which was responsible for a new and intense national struggle. Whatever be our judgment on Curzon's political activities, I cannot but remember today his words when on January 30, 1903, in declaring the Imperial Library open, he said,

"It will be a proud and happy reflection if I am able to say that I found Calcutta without a library worthy of the name and left it with a first-class and well-organised institution."

I am sure you will all agree with me that the hope which he then expressed has found its fulfilment today.

It is curious that about the same time that Curzon opened the Imperial Library, he also unveiled a monument built for the alleged victims of the Blackhole of Calcutta. History is no respecter of persons, and it is significant that while the Imperial Library opened by him not only exists but has developed into a national library, the monument he built to a myth has been swept away by the passage of time.

I do not want to bore you with details about the arrangements in the library or the different types of books, magazines and newspapers that it contains for the service of the public. All these will be available to you in the Jubilee Volume that is being published by the Library on this occasion. I would only like to draw your attention to the fact that when Curzon opened the Imperial Library, the number of books was less than a hundred thousand, while today the collection numbers more than seven and half lakhs of books and manuscripts. I realise that even this is not enough and that national libraries in other countries have far richer collections. I have, however, every hope that the library will continue to expand and will, in course of time, rival the

splendid libraries of Europe and America. The Government of India will spare no pains in this behalf and have already increased the annual grant for new purchases. I may also refer to the action already taken by the Government to secure for the library a valuable collection of Chinese classics as well as the literature of different Indian languages.

I may, at this stage, pay a tribute to the munificent donors who have presented collections to this library. The first name that occurs to me is that of Munshi Sadaruddin of Buhar. He was Mir Munshi of Mir Jaffar and also held a responsible position under Shah Alam. His memory will, however, be cherished, not for the political office that he held, but because of his love of learning. He laid the foundation of the Buhar Library in Burdwan and collected precious manuscripts of all types. His collection, which is now one of the valuable possessions of this library, contains the 12th century manuscript of Al Beruni's *Al Qanun* to which I referred earlier. This has on it the Seal of Fazil Khan, a famous Amir of Shah Jahan, who later became Prime Minister of Aurangzeb. Fazil Khan was not only a statesman but also a great engineer. After the Shalimar gardens in Lahore were built, it was discovered that the engineers had forgotten that the Ravi flowed on a lower level and hence water could not be obtained from it. Fazil Khan, through his ingenuity and skill, constructed a system by which the water was raised to the level of the garden. If therefore the Shalimar blooms to this day, the credit goes to Fazil Khan's skilful engineering.

Among recent donors, pride of place must go to the sons of the late Ashutosh Mookerji. They have made a gift of his entire collection of some 75 thousand books, covering all domains of human knowledge, to the National Library. I hope that other rich patrons of learning will seek to emulate these examples.

When I visited the British Museum, what impressed me most was its Reading Room. Here was a vast hall, full of earnest men and women devoted to the pursuit of knowledge. There was an atmosphere of silence and dignity which marked it out immediately as a true temple of learning. Any one who had to speak did so in a hushed voice so that others might not be disturbed. I have often felt that we must create the same conditions and atmosphere in our reading rooms and libraries. When I first came to the new home of the National Library, I felt that in what

was formerly the Ball Room of the palace we have a reading room which can, if only we wish, create the atmosphere and conditions of the Reading Room in the British Museum.

Old residents of Calcutta will, I have no doubt, welcome the transformation of what was a citadel of power into an abode of learning. Formerly, this palace was the preserve of State dignitaries and bureaucrats: today it is a temple of learning for whoever seeks to worship at its altar. Formerly, it was a place which imposed decisions on the people regardless of what they wished or needed: today, it is a storehouse from which the nation can derive its intellectual sustenance in accordance with its wishes and needs. The noble building and grounds which formerly catered for the proud rulers of the land will, henceforth, be the resort of even the humblest seeker of knowledge and truth.

When I first walked through the halls of this palace and saw its spacious lawns, I was reminded of a famous quatrain of Hafiz of Shiraz. Once before, in opening the Delhi Public Library, I referred to these lines. They, however, seem so appropriate to the National Library that I cannot help quoting them once again:

*Du yari Ziraku Waz Badai Kuhan du mani  
Faraghati u Kitabi U gushai Chamni  
Man in Maqam ba dunya U aqbat na deham  
Agarche dar Paim Ustand Khalq anjamani.*

*Two wise friends: two jugs of mellow wine: Leisure sweetened with books: and a corner of a garden.*

*If I can have these things, I would gladly give up all other pleasures of the world here and hereafter.*

Books you will find here in plenty. Two friends also should not be difficult to find. The lovely garden stretches before you, and you can choose for yourself a lonely corner. I must, of course, say with regret that the fourth condition of the poet cannot be satisfied; but I hope that your imagination will supply the deficiency!

## PROGRESS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to the eighth annual meeting of the All India Council for Technical Education. You are aware that the constitution of the Council has recently been revised in order to make it a more compact body and the Council, as reorganised, is meeting today for the first time. I will therefore crave your indulgence for a few minutes to refer to the circumstances in which the Council was originally set up and the work it has accomplished in the last seven years.

It was in January 1944 that the Central Advisory Board of Education recommended at the instance of the Technical Education Committee of that Body that the Government should set up a central organisation to stimulate, co-ordinate and control the provision of technical education on an all India basis. The Government considered that recommendation and set up the All India Council of Technical Education to survey the whole field of technical education and to advise them on measures that might be taken from time to time for development in this field. Sri Nalini Ranjan Sarkar was appointed Chairman of the first Council and he served for two terms with conspicuous ability. I must take this occasion to recall to your memory the services which he rendered as the first Chairman of the Council. I am sure you will all agree that his death is a great loss to the cause of technical education in the country.

In retrospect we now see more clearly one of the reasons for the establishment of the Council. After the outbreak of World War II, the Government of the day felt increasingly that they must secure the co-operation of Indian national leaders in order to create the necessary enthusiasm for the war effort. They tried to associate leaders of the Indian National Congress with the Government, but the Congress refused the invitation as the terms on which it was issued were unacceptable. The Government realised that they must have at least a semblance of Indian

*Address at the eighth meeting of the All India Council for Technical Education,  
New Delhi, February 8, 1953*

support and therefore invited some selected individuals to come into the Executive Council. They also wanted to prove to the world that even if the Congress leaders had not agreed to accept office, they were themselves anxious to develop nation-building services in India.

Those who accepted the British invitation were thus in a position of advantage and utilised the pressure exercised by the refusal of the Congress to give effect to a programme of expansion of various nation-building services. It was these circumstances which explain the plan of Post-War Educational Development in India (popularly known as the Sargent Report), the institution of the system of Overseas Scholarships, the establishment of the Council of Industrial and Scientific Research and the All India Council for Technical Education.

I have watched closely the valuable contribution of the Council towards the development of technical education in the country since its inception. As Minister of Education, I have naturally been interested in its working and I am happy that my association with the Council will henceforth be much closer than it had been in the past. Some of the landmarks in the history of the Council naturally come to my mind on this occasion. You are aware that it was primarily at the initiative of the Council that the Government of India decided to strengthen a number of under-graduate institutions in various parts of the country by providing grants, amounting to about 1.5 crores of rupees. It was also on the recommendations of the Council that the Government accepted the proposals of the Sarkar Committee to set up four higher institutes of technology in the country. The Council is also responsible for undertaking steps to establish closer relations between industries and educational institutions by establishing different types of industrial training schemes.

There has been a good deal of expansion of facilities in technical education during the last five years. Most of it has been provided, in the normal course, in the colleges preparing students for university degrees or college diplomas. I understand that the intake of engineering degree courses has increased from about 2,500 to over 3,700 in the last five years. The intake in engineering diploma courses has also increased from about 3,000 to almost 5,000 during the same period. In fact, there are some experts who hold that the expansion in facilities has been too rapid and

that there is not enough scope for the employment of the persons trained. Others hold equally strongly that even today we do not have an adequate number of properly trained personnel for the various approved projects and purposes. What is therefore needed is a review of our requirements not only in terms of numbers but also in terms of the type of training necessary.

In January 1951, the Council appointed a committee to assess the requirements of technical manpower with a view to undertaking this survey and also estimating what the requirements are likely to be for our various development schemes. I understand that, as the Planning Commission had not, until recently, taken final decisions on the various schemes, the Committee was unable to come to firm conclusions. Now that the Five Year Plan has been approved in principle, I hope that the Committee will carry out the task assigned to it as speedily as possible.

The members of the Council are aware that one of the bottlenecks in our programme of expansion of education has been finance. I am, however, glad to say that in the Five Year Plan we have been able to provide an additional two crore rupees over what was proposed in the Draft Plan, mainly as a result of the representations made by the Seven-Man Committee appointed by the Council at its last meeting. The total provision for the various types of technical education under the Five Year Plan will therefore be of the order of about Rs. 11 crore, out of which Rs. 3.55 crore will be available for entirely new projects. You will appreciate that the expenditure in the first year is likely to be less, for no project should be undertaken until it has been carefully examined. I have every hope that once development has been initiated according to the plan, we shall be able to carry through the expansion at an accelerated pace.

I am happy to report to you that the Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur has made further progress since the Council met last. This year, apart from admissions to the basic undergraduate courses in engineering, the Institute has accepted students for degrees in naval architecture, agricultural engineering and architecture. Post-graduate courses in production engineering and combustion engineering have also been started and a few students have undertaken research in various fields. The Institute has also organised a short course in Management studies, the first of its kind in Asia, which will enable persons drawn from

industries, commerce, Government departments and other lines of activity to come together and study the common principles of effective administration. The total number of students has risen to 700 and the next academic year will see a thousand students on its roll.

You are aware that the Council has recommended the setting up of four regional committees in order to establish closer relations between industries and educational institutions to their mutual advantage. The first of these committees, the Eastern Committee, was set up some time ago. The Western Committee has also now been set up and it held its first meeting at Bombay in October 1952. I hope that the committees for the South and the North will also start functioning before long. You will agree that the establishment of these regional committees will lead to a more effective realisation of the requirements and possibilities in these regions and help us to formulate an integrated plan for India as a whole.

One of the most important questions requiring the attention of the Council today is that of formulating a detailed plan to implement the recommendations of the Seven-Man Committee as incorporated in the Five Year Plan. General lines of development have no doubt been indicated by the Committee but it is for you to determine the steps that should be taken to give them a concrete shape. Facilities in technological study at the post-graduate level are inadequate and even though the two institutes at Kharagpur and Bangalore will go some way towards meeting our requirements, we still have to send a large number of students for training abroad. It must be one of the first priorities in our programme of expansion to develop these facilities within the country itself. I am sure you will agree that the highest consideration should be given to strengthening institutions which are in a position to fulfil the objectives we have in view.

Another field where concerted development is necessary is to provide facilities for proper training to the large body of untrained personnel in industries. A small beginning has been made in in-service training but this has to be expanded considerably. It will be no exaggeration to say that the future of the country's industries will largely depend upon our success in improving the quality of the personnel now employed in industries.

The Council has already had under consideration a scheme

for the development of facilities in applied arts and crafts. A conference of the principals of the art institutions in the country was recently held to consider the question further and it has made some important and far-reaching recommendations. One recommendation, which is somewhat novel and involves a departure from the present practice of the other bodies associated with the Council, deserves your special attention. The conference has recommended that after the Council has satisfied itself about the standards of the institutions concerned, it should recognise the various examinations held by them for purposes of the national diplomas and certificates. If this principle of decentralisation, which, I may add, is in line with current practice in the United Kingdom, is accepted in other fields of technical education, I feel it will lead to a wider adoption of the Council's schemes throughout the country and result in an all-round improvement of standards.

You are aware that the Government of India make no grants to technical institutions until their case has been examined by the Council and its co-ordinating committee. The first programme for aid to institutions is almost complete and you may consider what further steps should now be taken. The last important issue to which I would draw your notice is the need of setting up an Assessment Board for the recognition of technical and professional qualifications for employment. There is today considerable confusion in regard to the recognition of the numerous qualifications and awards for purposes of employment in government service. Industries and commerce also depend largely on the Government for guidance in the matter of recognition of various qualifications. It is therefore necessary to set up suitable central machinery which will remove the prevailing confusion and place the recognition of qualifications on a proper basis.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome the new members to the Council and express, on your behalf and on my own, our appreciation of the services of those whose membership has ceased.



## HOUSING AND NATIONAL PROSPERITY

With the opening of the Central Building Research Institute at Roorkee, the last of the eleven National Laboratories included in the first plan of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, will start functioning formally. The establishment of these laboratories will form a landmark in the history of India's industrial development. They represent the first systematic and planned attempt to apply science and technology to the growth and development of India's national industries.

With the introduction of modern education in India in the beginning of the 19th century, colleges and universities were established and interest in the study of science grew. For a long time, however, they offered little, if any, encouragement to research or original work. It is perhaps significant that the first initiative in this direction came from private individuals and non-official agencies. The Indian Association for Cultivation of Sciences was established in Calcutta in 1876, mainly through the generosity of the late Mahendra Lal Sarker. The generosity and foresight of Jamshed Tata led to the foundation of the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore in 1911. The Bose Research Institute was the result of the devoted work of Jagadish Chandra Bose and was founded in 1917. The establishment of these institutions marked a great step forward and led to the growth of a spirit of research in the universities. But these institutions as well as the different university departments had and have, as their main object, the quest of truth and the advancement of knowledge. While they have contributed to the enrichment of knowledge, they did not and were not in fact planned to serve as agencies for the economic and industrial development of the country.

There was, thus, in our educational and scientific institutions a gap whose existence hampered the growth and development of our national industries. The establishment of these eleven labo-

---

*Speech on the opening of the Central Building Research Institute at Roorkee, April 12, 1953*

ratories is therefore a step of the greatest importance for the future progress of the country, and I can say with confidence that, of the diverse nation-building activities undertaken after the attainment of independence, it will rank among the most important.

The history of the Indian Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is well known, but may well bear repetition. It was during 1942, when, on account of war, the import of all kinds of industrial goods from abroad ceased, and there was simultaneously an immense increase in the demand for them that the Council was established to find a solution of what appeared an almost insoluble problem. The work during this period was, from the nature of the case, of an emergency nature, and the real developmental programme of the Council began only after the attainment of independence. I have already referred to the achievements of the Council since 1947, and it appears to me that the one reason for its splendid success is that the Council is an autonomous body with its own budget and free from formalities and red-tape which slow down the administrative machine of the Government. Even the Minister-in-charge, who supervises the activities of the Council, does so not as a Minister but as an office-bearer of the Council. There is, thus, no outside interference with the activities of the Council, and to a large measure the success of the Council is due to this fact.

The Council functions through 27 research committees which deal with different branches of science and technology. These are advisory bodies consisting of experts from both science and industry. The Council thus includes, among its members, some of the best representatives from both these fields and I would like to pay a tribute to them for the efficiency and despatch with which its work is carried out.

I must also record that the work of the Council would not have progressed so rapidly unless it had had from the very beginning a Director marked by great imagination, drive and initiative. It is generally held that the place of the scientist is in a laboratory and not on the chair of an administrator. The Director of the Council has proved that an eminent scientist can fill the role of an administrator with equal distinction. I am of course referring to Dr. Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar whom I would like to congratulate on his achievement. I would also ask him to convey my

appreciation to his colleagues without whose co-operation his work could not have been accomplished.

The establishment of a Central Building Research Institute is in accordance with the recommendations of the Building Research Committee set up by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. As a start, a Building Research Unit was set up at Roorkee to work in co-operation with the Thomson College of Engineering, now the Technical University of Roorkee. The Unit consisted of two sections—one entrusted with research on short-term problems and the other with the planning and establishment of the Institute. In 1950, the Unit was transformed into the Institute and the foundation-stone of its new buildings laid in February 1951. Work on them began in December 1951, and we are today celebrating the completion of the first stage of their construction.

The problems for investigation in an institute of this type are largely common to different countries, but there are some which are of special interest to India. The Institute will therefore pay special attention to problems like factors governing comfort and efficiency under tropical conditions, the study of soil stabilisation, the use of indigenous materials, the utilisation of industrial wastes, the construction of houses for persons of low income on an extensive scale, etc. The work of the Institute will deal with these problems under four main heads, viz., (a) building materials, (b) methods of construction, (c) performance of buildings, and (d) survey and information. I need not go into details which you will find in the brochure published for the occasion but may mention four typical problems whose satisfactory solution will have a great significance for the development of our building industry. They relate to the improvement in the quality of bricks, the possible use of bamboo as a reinforcing material, the investigation on novel methods of construction evolved by the Institute itself or by others, the prefabrication and assembling of building components, heat and sound insulation, resistance to moisture penetration, fire and weather, the consideration of new architectural and structural designs and problems relating to brick industry, lime industry, etc.

Surveys will also help to assess the capacity of the building industry of India and co-ordinate its development with the Five Year Plan. Practical results obtained by research investigation

or useful information obtained from surveys will be made available to the building industry in a form suitable for ready application to practical works. Since building industry covers the development and manufacture of various building materials as well as the use of such materials in the actual construction of buildings, the Institute will have divisions dealing with the production and testing of materials as well as with the construction and testing of structures. In addition, the Institute will provide for scientific and technical work in its divisions of chemistry, architectural physics and engineering.

The Government of India have sanctioned a grant of Rs. 21 lakh for capital expenditure on the establishment of the Institute, and of this amount Rs. 18 lakh have already been spent. The present site of the Institute measures 10 acres but an additional area of 57 acres has been acquired to provide residential accommodation to the staff and for the further expansion of the Institute. The Institute has 41 persons on its technical staff while another 41 look after the administration and office work. The recurring expenditure, when the Institute is fully staffed, will be of the order of about Rs. 5 lakh a year.

I am sure you will all agree that the provision of better housing is one of the most important tasks which faces the nation. Without better living conditions in villages and towns the state of health of the people cannot be adequately improved. While India has been well known for its architectural achievements of the past, we have to admit that today the art of construction does not exhibit the skill or standard which has been its pride in the past. Better houses in towns and the provision of cheap, durable and comfortable houses for villagers and industrial labourers is a prime need of the day, and I have every hope that this Institute will make a solid contribution to the solution of this national problem.

## STANDARDS IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

120  
I am glad to welcome you today to this conference. As you are aware, our object is to discuss problems of universities with special reference to the improvement of standards and co-ordination of facilities for higher education. It was my intention to call this conference in January but on account of pressure of work this could not be done.]

1 The problem we have met to discuss is not new, though it has acquired a new urgency after the attainment of independence. You are all aware that for the last thirty years or more there have been persistent and at times well-founded criticisms of our universities. The great increase in the number of students has been accompanied by a fall in the standard of attainment. Ill-equipped and ill-trained graduates have increased the number of the unemployed. Their indiscipline and lack of purpose have added to our difficulties at a time when the attainment of independence has posed great problems of reconstruction and development before the country.

2 It was in order to examine the existing defects and make recommendations for the remodelling of university education in conformity with the needs of free India that the Radhakrishnan Commission was appointed in 1948. The Commission made a careful survey of the entire field and made recommendations for necessary changes in the academic, financial and administrative set-up of our universities in the new context. It redefined the aims and objects of university education and placed special emphasis on the establishment of proper relations between the universities on the one hand and the Central and State Governments on the other. One of its basic recommendations was for the creation of a machinery for the most economic utilisation of our existing resources by avoiding wastage or unnecessary duplication in the fields of higher study and research.

The problem of university education was also considered at

*Speech at the conference of State Education Ministers and Vice-Chancellors of the Universities, New Delhi, April 18, 1953*

the time when the Indian Constitution was being framed. There were detailed discussions as to whether university education should be made a Central or a State responsibility. The Radhakrishnan Commission had recommended that the "all-India aspects of university education, the repercussions and interchanges necessary and desirable between universities, and the need for a national guarantee of minimum standards of efficiency" require that university education should be a concurrent responsibility of the Centre and the States. The Commission had, in particular, mentioned that co-ordination of facilities in special subjects, the liaison between the universities and national research laboratories and scientific surveys, the adoption of national policies and the maintenance of standards of efficiency should be the special concern of the Government of India. That this view carried due weight in the framing of the Constitution may be seen from the inclusion of a specific item in the Constitution making co-ordination and maintenance of standards the exclusive responsibility of the Central Government. I am referring to entry 66 in List I of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution defining the exclusive jurisdiction of the Union Government, which reads as follows:—

"Co-ordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions."

The co-ordination of facilities in higher education and the maintenance of standards of university education is thus an exclusive Central responsibility. This makes it necessary for the Government of India to take an immediate and direct interest in the affairs of all universities in order to ensure that the provisions of the Constitution are carried out. The Government has considered the matter carefully and reached the conclusion that this responsibility cannot be discharged without the creation of an agency which would enable the Government to carry out the necessary supervision and over-all guidance. Since this duty is an exclusive Central responsibility, the Government would have been entitled to set up, for these purposes, an official body composed of its own officers and nominees. The Government did not, however, do so. The Government recognises the value of university autonomy and desires that the necessary reforms in universities should, as far as possible, be initiated by the universities

themselves. The Government is also of the view that in all such steps for the improvement of standards of higher education in the country, the co-operation of the States at every step is not only desirable but essential. It is on this account that the Government of India prepared a draft Bill entitled "Universities (Regulation of Standards) Bill." Before introducing it into Parliament the Government of India referred it to the State Governments and the universities for their advice and guidance.

I must confess that I have been somewhat surprised by the response of the universities to this gesture of co-operation by the Central Government. The Inter-University Board, in its Madras session, has expressed itself against the Bill and raised doubts about its purpose and provisions. Nevertheless, the Board itself had to recognise the need of a machinery to effect co-ordination and improvement of standards. In view of this recognition, the suggestion that the draft Bill indicates a desire of the Government of India to interfere with the internal autonomy of the universities is quite unfounded, and it is difficult for me to understand the grounds for such suspicion. As I have already said, the Government could, if it so wished, introduce the Bill without referring to the universities. That it has not done so is itself evidence of the Government's regard for university autonomy. Further, the constitution of the body proposed in the Bill is such as to ensure that the autonomy of the universities will be respected. The Government could have proposed the appointment of a body under its own control to look into the affairs of the universities but, instead, the Government has proposed that it should be an autonomous body, set up by legislation, consisting of representatives of universities and other distinguished educationists.

The statutory character of the body and the composition of its membership are in themselves evidence of the Government's desire that there should not be too much departmental interference with the internal affairs of the universities, while, at the same time, ensuring that proper standards are maintained and some of the glaring defects of university education removed. I am sure you will agree with me that if the Indian universities have today fallen into comparative disrepute, much of the responsibility lies with the universities themselves. Their administration has, in many cases, become slack and standards impaired through mainly non-academic causes, into the details of which I need not

go. However, since the Inter-University Board has raised objections, I felt it desirable to summon a conference of Vice-Chancellors and Education Ministers and find out what they base their objections on. I need hardly add that I am always willing to consider any constructive suggestions they might make for the improvement of standards in universities and better co-ordination of their facilities.

I assume that we have met with a common objective, viz., the reform of university education, with a view to making the universities agencies of national regeneration in independent India. I have made a passing reference to the fact that universities do not today enjoy the public esteem accorded to them in the past. The reasons for this are many but two may be especially mentioned. One is the largely academic character of the instruction in the universities which, instead of developing the personality of the student and enabling him to make a place in society for himself, often converts him into a misfit who adds to the number of the unemployed, if not the unemployable. The other is that even the standards of academic education have fallen so much that persons who have reached the highest stage are not only ill-informed and ill-educated about the affairs of the world but are sometimes ignorant of the elementary things in their own fields of study. Inefficiency and corruption, which have also crept into some of the university administrations, have contributed to the public's loss of confidence in them.

While no one is more keenly conscious of the defects of the present position, I should, at the same time, like to say that I do not believe that a sweeping condemnation of the universities and university education is justified. Today, it has become almost a fashion for everyone to get up and condemn all universities outright but they forget that if our universities have many defects, they have also many virtues. Nor can we forget that they have made a solid contribution to the achievement of Indian independence by awakening a new political consciousness among large numbers of their alumni.

I must also point out that not all the present defects of the universities are due to faults of the staff or the administration. Many of them are a direct outcome of the system which has been set up. The fact that a university degree is an indispensable condition for employment in most types of service has induced



5 a rush for degrees and led to overcrowding in the universities. As a degree is regarded as a passport to any employment, some universities felt that they should not deny this passport to their students. There was thus a tendency to pass as many students as possible, if necessary even by lowering the standards. Once this downward trend began, it was difficult to check it, for any university which sought to maintain a high standard faced the risk of losing its students to other universities with lowered standards. The fact that degrees are essential pre-requisites for employment had an undesirable effect on students as well. It made them pay more attention to the passing of examinations than to the acquisition of knowledge.

6 On the other hand, the lack of adequate financial support for the universities leaves them with no option but to encourage the inflow into universities of as large a number of students as possible. In a situation where many of the universities derive a major portion of their income from the tuition and examination fees of students, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the university to exercise adequate control on the discipline and standards of study of its students. I may tell you that the Government is aware of these problems and we are now considering various measures to ease the situation. In many countries the possession of a degree is not an essential condition for employment in government service. We are therefore also considering whether a change can be made in our present practice. A proposal is under examination that we should not insist on degrees for employment except only in specialised posts which require high academic qualifications. This can be done only if we are able to devise some alternative method of recruitment to different types and grades of public service, which will be objective, flexible and free from the defects of the present system.

7 I have mentioned that one defect of the existing system of university education is its abstract and academic character. This, in itself, would not have been so serious a defect in a country with a different social background. University education must, in any case, involve a high degree of specialisation and abstraction. Unfortunately in India, this emphasis on the intellectual and academic aspect has been accompanied by the loss of manual skills, and, what is worse, a repugnance for various types of manual labour. Instead of recognising the dignity of labour,

1 university students are often inclined to look down upon manual work. The Government of India have for a long time been in correspondence with the universities to devise measures to inculcate a sense of the dignity of labour among students and develop in them the habit of doing manual work. One suggestion which was sent for your consideration was to find out whether students could not be utilised for some of the work which is now performed by paid labour. There is also no reason why students should not help in the maintenance and repair of roads, gardens, furniture and some of the buildings of educational institutions. Colleges could also adopt a village, preferably one that is easy of access, and try to effect improvements in housing, sanitation, communications and education through the voluntary labour of students.

2 With the acceptance of the Five Year Plan in which a co-ordinated effort is being made to improve rural areas through community development projects, a field of activity has opened up where University students can render the greatest service to the country. I would suggest for your consideration that each university might undertake a project by which a selected rural area is adopted by the university and the university undertakes the responsibility of carrying out developmental programmes—educational as well as material—within that area. I should be happy if you would consider this question also during your deliberations today and tomorrow and make specific proposals to the Government to this end. I may add that if the universities undertake any such programme of activities, the Government may be in a position to place small funds at the disposal of the Vice-Chancellors to enable them to set up an agency, which will plan, execute and supervise such activities.

3 I would also like you to consider carefully what exactly we mean by university autonomy. As I have said before, I am against any undue interference by the Government or any other body with the internal affairs of the universities. At the same time, I would like to say categorically that university autonomy is not an end in itself but a means to an end. That end is the achievement of satisfactory academic standards and the maintenance of the high dignity of the universities as seats of learning and culture. If therefore these ends are not fulfilled, the community has a right to demand such changes as will make their achievement possible. 4 To resist measures for the purpose in the name of university

autonomy is therefore totally unjustified. The universities do not exist in dignified isolation but are components of society and hence society has a right to determine what will be the character and aims of the university. The State, as the organised executive of the community, has therefore not only the right but the duty to ensure that the university fulfils those aims which society has a right to expect from them. The Government of India is aware of its responsibilities in this respect and is determined to discharge the duty it owes to the community.

What I have in mind will become clearer if we consider how the idea of academic freedom has developed. Our universities derive their traditions mainly from the British universities. You are aware that in a country which has party Government, there is a tendency for officials to change with the change of the party in power. Two Governors-General of India lost their office—one even before he could come out to India—on account of a change in the party Government in Britain. There was a risk that there might be similar interference with appointments in the universities. It is bad enough if officials change with a change in Government, but the position would be intolerable if learned and able teachers were dismissed to make room for incompetent and unqualified persons on political grounds. That is why, in course of time, a convention has grown up to give security to university teachers and see that the best men are placed in charge of the education of the future generations. University autonomy was therefore recognised in order to achieve academic freedom and higher educational standards. If there is a fall in academic standards, and the administration of the university becomes defective, you will surely agree that the plea of university autonomy cannot be used as a defence against effecting the necessary reforms.

We are today passing through an age when old traditions are crumbling and new values have to be built up in their place. The old order has passed but a new order is not yet born. The happiness and prosperity of millions demand that this revolutionary reconstruction of society should be carried out not by violent or disruptive methods but through a process of legislation and planned change. Obviously, the universities must play an important role in initiating such changes and serve as agencies for the creation of new ideals and the training up of workers in their

8 cause. This, however, requires the reform and regeneration of the universities themselves in order to enable them to carry out this momentous task. The creation of a strong agency which will jealously guard their standards and co-ordinate their resources and facilities is essential if the universities are to regain their old prestige and become centres of a new national awakening. We have met today to find out the best method of doing so, and I have every hope that before we disperse we will have arrived at an agreed solution of one of the most pressing problems facing higher education in the country.

## NATURE AND MAN

It gives me great pleasure to present to you this team of brave, resolute and courageous spirits who have achieved one of the most splendid triumphs of our time. My pleasure is all the greater because I know that the joy of this achievement is shared by the whole world. I present to you, Sir, the members of the British Everest Expedition who, having conquered the highest peak on earth, have now come in our midst.

We all know how difficult and arduous this enterprise was. The human spirit has faced in many fields Nature's most tremendous challenges. The history of science is one long story of such struggles. But the challenge which these friends faced 29,002 feet above us was in many respects unique. In other fields, man's endeavour has been greatly aided by human ingenuity and by instruments of science. It is these instruments which have often decided the fate of the combat. But in the battle waged by these friends, ingenuity and mechanical aid were of limited help only. No doubt they helped to overcome some obstacles on the way, but not the real and the most difficult of all obstacles. We all know what it is. It is the hostility of the environment which makes it almost impossible for the human organism to function on such heights. Here, where Nature assumes its most terrific aspect and the elements are most ruthlessly at war, the human body and mind, adapted to the exigencies of an environment, 29,000 feet below, feel powerless and almost cease to respond. In such a battle weapons are of little avail. Only invincible courage and undaunted will-power can help a man to succeed.

From 1921 to 1952, eleven attempts were made by brave and resolute men to conquer this field, but each time they had to retire before mightier forces. At last the time came when the issue of this great battle was decided in favour of the spirit of man. It was this heroic British Expedition, whom we have the pleasure of welcoming in our midst today, which finally succeeded in planting the banner of victory over this field. Like the Roman

---

*Speech at the President's Reception to members of the British Everest Expedition, Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, June 29, 1953*

conqueror of old, they may well say—we came, we saw, we conquered.

There can be no doubt that the credit of this splendid triumph must go to the team spirit and the fine organising ability of the leadership of the expedition. The nature of the undertaking was such that no single individual or even two or three individuals together, however brave and spirited, could have achieved this triumph. Only the collective heroism of a well-organised team could have achieved this feat which the British Expedition has achieved. It was essential that every member of the Expedition should be carefully selected and allotted his share in the division of labour and that all should be wholly and equally inspired by the spirit of team work, of selfless co-operation and, above all, by a high sense of discipline. All these conditions could not have been satisfied if the Expedition had not been fortunate in having so able and earnest a leadership. The experience of previous expeditions was fully utilised and all contingencies foreseen. Every necessity was anticipated and carefully provided for, from oxygen to powdered ink, and every aid that modern science and industry could give, was made use of. The utility of each one of these has now been tested in this experiment.

The important problem that has to be faced in scaling Everest is to decide how many camps should be set up on the way and at what altitude the last camp should be. Up to the time of this Expedition, the highest camp built had been at a height of 25,000 feet, i.e., the last stage of the climb was about 4,000 feet, without any camp on the way for emergency refuge. Needless to say, this was the most arduous of all the stages. If the weather took a sudden turn for the worse, or if darkness descended earlier than anticipated, the climbers had no nearby shelter and were wholly at the mercy of chance. Thus, many of them were suddenly caught in blizzards and had to spend the night in ice caves. Wiser for the misadventures of their predecessors, the present Expedition decided to build the maximum number of camps from the base of the ascent to the top. Eight such camps were set up, of which the last was at 27,900 feet. This meant that the final stage which formerly was of 4,000 feet, was now reduced to 1,100 feet. Whoever was to attempt the last ascent had now to cover, not 4,000 feet as before, but only 1,100 feet in one climb. This wise arrangement reduced the danger and difficulty of the

final assault to the minimum. Although it is obvious how difficult an undertaking it must have been to build a camp at 27,900 feet, the wonderful sense of discipline and co-operative spirit of the team overcame all obstacles. On the evening of May 28 Sir Edmund Hillary and Sri Tenzing reached this last camp and spent the night there. On the following dawn they set out for the last lap of the journey and, thanks to their courage, skill and fortitude, stood on the top of the world at 11-30 in the morning.

Sir, you will agree with me that every member of the Expedition deserves to be congratulated for this heroic and splendid achievement. It was the joint and selfless contribution of all which made possible what had hitherto been impossible. In particular we congratulate Sir John Hunt whose fine leadership planned the assault and Sri Tenzing and Sir Edmund Hillary to whom fell the heroic task of covering the last lap of the journey and who fulfilled it with splendid courage and extraordinary endurance.

Sir, the story of the conquest of the highest peak in the world is now at an end. If we turn back the pages of history, we will see that this story began more than 200 years ago. The earliest record we have of a survey of the Himalayas is in the 18th century. It was in 1711 that some French Jesuit Fathers trained a few Chinese Lamas to survey Tibet. This was done under the Chinese Government's instructions. In 1717, the Jesuit Fathers prepared a map of Tibet based on this survey, in which was shown a range of mountains which stretched for 40 miles along the southern boundary. This was the first map of the Himalayan peaks. In 1735, the famous French Geographer, D'Anville, published this map in Paris. The Himalayan peaks were thus put on the map of the world but their exact heights could not be ascertained. In 1849, a party of the Survey of India located the highest peak of the Himalayas and marked it in the map as XV. In 1852, it was first discovered that this was probably the world's highest peak. An Indian member of the Survey party, Radhanath Sikdar, first came to this conclusion but at that time the exact height of the peak could not be measured. This was achieved in 1865 when it was ascertained that peak XV was 29,002 feet high and was the highest on this earth.

Attempts were then made to find out the local name of this peak. The French Jesuits had called it "Tchoumou Lancma",

basing it on the descriptions supplied by the Chinese Lamas. The names *Devadhunga* and *Gaurishankar* were also suggested by some documents. But after careful enquiry it was found that the Tibetan name did not refer to any particular peak but to the whole range of mountains. Nor was any sufficient evidence found to support the claim of *Devadhunga*. *Gaurishankar*, it was discovered, was not the name of the highest peak but of another peak which was lower by 5,500 feet. Since no authentic local name was available, the then Surveyor-General of India, Sir Andrew Waugh, with the permission of the Royal Geographical Society of London, named the peak XV "Mount Everest" after the ex-Surveyor-General, Sir George Everest. Between 1921 and 1924 the Royal Geographical Society and the Alpine Club organised three expeditions to climb Everest. As a result of these expeditions, a great deal of topographical information regarding the northern slopes of Mount Everest was collected. It is believed that on June 8, 1924, Mallory and Irvine had almost reached the summit, but as they did not return alive, no authentic information could be obtained. Mr. Odell had reached a height of 27,000 feet while Col. Norton and Dr. Somervell had achieved 28,000 feet. Thus, only the last 1,000 feet of Mount Everest remained to be conquered. This has now been achieved by the British Expedition. Thus the romance of the world's highest peak, which began in 1717, was completed on May 29, 1953.

Sir, I have now the honour to request you to decorate Sir John Hunt, Sri Tenzing Norkay Sherpa and Sir Edmund Hillary with the special medals made for this occasion and to present to every member of this distinguished expedition a silver shield as a memento of their great achievement.



## SCIENCE AND PROSPERITY

We have met today to lay the foundation-stone of the 12th National Institute started under the auspices of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. Though the Council was set up in 1942, it is only since 1949 that its programme of expansion began in real earnest. In the five years since then, eleven National Laboratories have already been set up and are functioning in different parts of the country. The establishment of the 12th institute therefore means that the Council has been setting up more than two institutes a year. I am sure you will agree that this is a rate of progress which, judged by any standard, cannot be considered slow, especially if we remember that each of the National Laboratories has conformed to the highest standards and compares favourably with similar institutions in any other part of the world.

The Electronic Engineering Research Institute, which is being brought into being today, will fill a lacuna in one of the basic fields of modern scientific research in India. During the last two decades, and particularly during the last World War, electronic research progressed at a rapid rate and there is no field of science or industry that has not been aided by electronic research. Electronics has played a notable part in the developments which took place during the war for the radio location of aircrafts and submarines. Electronic machines are employed to solve complicated equations and save much laborious calculations. Problems which would require a band of mathematicians years to solve are dealt with by these machines in hours. In industry, electronic equipment has been used to melt metals, case-harden them, heat plastics and control chemical processes. Electronics is also responsible for rapid strides in the field of radio communication and television. In a word, the development of electronics has become of fundamental importance both from the point of view of theoretical research and the application of its results to practical affairs.

---

*Address delivered at the laying of the foundation-stone of the 12th National Institute, Pilani, September 21, 1953*

Against this background of developments in other countries, India unfortunately has little to show. Research in radio and electronics has been confined only to a few centres like the Calcutta University Institute of Electronics, the National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi, and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay. These centres cannot, however, meet all our needs. There is not only scope but an urgent necessity to set up an institute specialising in this vast field. Notwithstanding the fact that certain investigations sponsored by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and other bodies have demonstrated the possibility of using indigenous material for the manufacture of component parts of the radio, it has been found that the necessary progress is not possible without a separate institution devoting itself entirely to this field.

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research therefore appointed a committee with Sri Kasturbhai Lalbhai as Chairman and Drs. S. S. Bhatnagar, H. J. Bhabha, K. S. Krishnan and J. C. Ghosh to report on (a) the priority to be accorded to research in radio and electronic engineering; (b) the possibility of having one or more production centres for these materials; (c) the best location of the proposed industrial undertaking and other points; and (d) the financial provision, both of a capital and recurring nature, required for the Institute. The Committee have, after careful consideration, recommended that, for the present, a sum of Rs. 25 lakh should be provided towards capital expenditure for the Institute and Rs. 5 lakh per annum for recurring expenditure.

Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar, Director, Scientific and Industrial Research, with his characteristic energy discussed the proposal with Sri G. D. Birla and was able to secure a generous donation of Rs. 21 lakh non-recurring and Rs. 50,000 recurring from the Birla Education Trust towards the establishment of the Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute. The Trust have already acquired a plot of over 700 bighas at a cost of approximately Rs. 1,50,000 for the establishment of the Institute at Pilani. The Birla family is well known for its generosity and this fresh gift in a public cause will be appreciated throughout India.

Some of you may have wondered why Pilani was chosen for the location of the Institute. Now that you have visited the place and seen the many fine educational institutions that have been

built up here, I am sure you will agree that the choice has been the right one. For the expeditious execution of the programme, a local Planning Committee has been constituted with the Director, Scientific and Industrial Research, as its Chairman, Sri G. D. Birla, Lala Sri Ram, Dr. K. S. Krishnan, Dr. D. S. Kothari and Colonel S. D. Pande as its members, and the Planning Officer as its Secretary.

The object of the Institute will be to conduct research on the utilisation of indigenous raw materials and to evolve processes on a pilot-plant scale to see if they would make reliable and quality components. The Institute will also conduct investigations on the development and use of electronic circuits to facilitate and improve the efficiency of all indigenous industries, to build standard electronic instruments for test purposes, to develop special radio circuits, to develop electronic apparatus for medical profession, to conduct experiments on communications, radar and other equipment, to develop and build acoustic instruments, and to utilise electronics for industrial purposes. The Institute will undertake projects sponsored by industries or initiate investigations, depending on the urgency of the problem for the benefit of industries.

The Institute will ultimately have a number of divisions and sections dealing with :

- (1) electronic circuits;
- (2) communication equipment;
- (3) industrial electronics;
- (4) electronic components;
- (5) thermionic valves;
- (6) electronic instruments;
- (7) medical apparatus;
- (8) acoustics-audio equipment;
- (9) theatre and studio equipment; and
- (10) very high frequency equipment.

I now request the Prime Minister to lay the foundation-stone of the Central Electronics Engineering Research Institute.

## FUTURE OF EDUCATION IN INDIA

Of the problems which claimed our special attention after independence, one of the most important was that of national education and what may be called its system or pattern. We hear today an almost universal cry that there is something wrong with our educational system, that it has failed to meet the demands of the situation and therefore needs to be reformed. But, in spite of this feeling, there are very few people who have actually thought over the problem and are able to say what exactly is wrong with the system and in what manner it should be reformed.

An obvious defect, which should be evident to every one, is that the general education available to the common people is neither adequate, nor appropriate to their needs, and the privileged minority who are fortunate enough to receive higher education in the universities cannot be usefully employed. The result is that of the thousands of graduates who are turned out by our universities every year, a large proportion is unable to secure employment and is forced to join the ranks of the unemployed. There are at present about 3 to 3½ lakhs of students receiving education in our universities. This is by no means a large number for a country with a population of about 35 crores, and yet there is somewhere so radical a defect in our system that even this small number cannot find useful employment.

Unfortunately, the main objective of those who seek higher education in our country is to secure government service. It is obvious that the Government cannot give jobs to all. The result is that our educational system, instead of enabling people to become useful members of society, makes them superfluous and turns what should be an asset into a liability. If many of these educated persons had received no education, they could at least have earned their livelihood by some kind of manual labour. As it is, they cannot do even that.

Let me now, in the few minutes that are available to me, tell you what I think about this matter.

Every individual has a right to an education that will enable him to develop his faculties and live a full human life. Such education is the birth right of every citizen. A State cannot claim to have discharged its duty till it has provided for every single individual the means to the acquisition of knowledge and self-betterment. For education up to this standard, the question of requirements of society does not arise, nor can we provide facilities only in accordance with the existing demands. Every individual, unconditionally and without qualifications, is entitled to education up to this stage. To my mind, the requisite standard for such education is the secondary stage and I am convinced that regardless of the question of employment, the State must make available to all citizens the facilities of education up to the secondary stage.

There are three stages in this secondary education—elementary, middle and higher. Of these, elementary and middle are the more important because the foundation of the entire edifice of national education is laid in these two early stages. If the foundation is weak or wrongly laid, the rest of the structure is insecure or faulty. For these two stages we have accepted the pattern of basic education which is of great importance to the whole structure of our national education. To the extent to which we are able to implement effectively this pattern, we shall succeed in reforming the entire structure.

Beyond this stage, the position is somewhat different. When we consider the facilities for higher education in a State, we must match the facilities to the needs of society. Any maladjustment between demand and supply at this stage would create problems which the State must at all costs seek to avoid. Apart from any other reason, the provision of higher education is so expensive that no State can afford to increase the number of persons receiving such education beyond what it can absorb. In the field of economics, there is always a close correlation between demand and supply. Any deviation from such correlation leads to social crises. In the field of higher education, we must accept the same law and fashion the supply according to the demands of society. If the supply is less than the demand, the progress of society is impeded; if it is more, there is unemployment. A fundamental

defect of our educational system is that this very obvious and important consideration is overlooked. A university degree has been made a necessary qualification for government service, with the result that everyone runs after a degree and, having secured it, is faced with the disillusionment that what he spent his years and money on is not of much value in the market.

If we wish to avoid these unfortunate consequences, we should so organise our system of education that the majority of our people, having passed through the secondary stage, are able to engage themselves in the various professions, industries, handicrafts, etc., and only a small number which is considered adequate to the needs of society, go on to the universities for higher education. It is obvious that we cannot forcibly prevent people from joining the universities, but we can certainly create such conditions as will eliminate the present unhealthy inducements which lure so many students into the universities, not for the sake of knowledge but for the sake of degrees. It is unnecessary for me, nor is there sufficient time, to discuss this point in more detail.

There is, however, in this connection one more question which naturally arises. Is the present exaggerated emphasis on university degrees as a qualification for government service justified? The fact that a university degree is a necessary condition for government service has led people to look upon university degrees as a passport to government service. Those who join universities do so not to cultivate talent but to secure this passport. This state of affairs has had its repercussions on our universities also. Consciously or unconsciously an atmosphere was created which inevitably brought their standards down. Gradually a mental attitude was developed which seemed to say: "Let us have as many students as we can get and let as many as possible be given degrees." The natural result was that the standards of education steadily declined and how low they have become can be easily judged by those who are in a position to test the merit of our present-day graduates.

We know that in other countries government servants are not recruited in this fashion. In England, for example, while degrees are a necessary qualification for certain posts requiring professional training, as in the case of doctors, professors, engineers and the like, for other appointments the only qualifications deemed

necessary are of age and of particular ability for the post. A university degree as such is not an essential condition.

It is time that we too in India considered seriously the adoption of a similar procedure of recruitment. Why should we continue to regard the university degree as a passport to service ? Our stress should be on ability and not on the possession of a degree. Our Public Service Commissions should evolve methods of testing such ability. For example, in the case of jobs for which it is necessary today for a candidate to be a B. A., we may lay down that a candidate's general ability and knowledge should be equal to that of a graduate, so that while we ensure that we get the right people for right jobs, the present unhealthy emphasis on degrees will be replaced by that on ability. This alone will go a long way in changing the mentality of our students.

We have, of course, to bear in mind that, so far as professional services are concerned, the acquisition of a university degree will continue to be necessary. We should allow no relaxation in this matter. We cannot accept a doctor or an engineer or a professor except on the basis of his academic qualifications. It is only in the case of appointments of a general nature which require no special or technical qualifications that we have to change the procedure of recruitment.

There is no doubt that such a change would add considerably to the work of our Public Service Commissions who will have to hold examinations for appointments. It may be necessary for us to increase the number of Public Service Commissions, but whatever arrangements may prove to be necessary, the step is worth taking.

Let me briefly recapitulate what I have said :

- (1) We have to remould our system of education and so organise it that a great majority of our people, after completing their secondary education, should be absorbed in the various professions, industries, handicrafts, etc. Only a small proportion should pursue higher education in the universities and their number should not exceed the capacity of the society to make good use of them.
- (2) The most urgent and important changes needed are in our system of secondary education. Our present system of secondary education was conceived as a stepping stone

to the universities. What we want now is a system of secondary education which will not be a mere means to something else but an end in itself.

- (3) We have accepted the pattern of basic education, of which the main idea is that learning should be not merely through books but through some form of manual work. This principle should be given effect to throughout the secondary education stage and should, in fact, become the basic principle of our national education.
- (4) Since we propose to change the shape of our secondary education, it is necessary that it should not be cast in a single rigid mould. It should have sufficient elasticity to meet the different needs of different groups of people. The Secondary Education Commission has made some very valuable recommendations in this respect which need to be seriously considered.
- (5) We have also to consider whether the present insistence on degrees as a necessary condition for government service should be continued or modified.

The problem of how best to improve the standards of our university education is no less important, but the limited time at my disposal prevents me from dwelling on it.



## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

120 I am glad to welcome you again to this the twentieth meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education. I regret that it has not been possible to call the meeting earlier. When it became clear that it could not be held before August or September, I decided that we should wait till the Report of the Secondary Education Commission had been published and made available to the members for consideration. This, as you know, was submitted at the end of August and the Board will therefore have an opportunity to consider it at this meeting. I have, however, directed that in future the meetings of the Central Advisory Board should be held every year in the third week of January.

All educationists today are concerned at the evident lack of adjustment between the educational system and the needs of the community. The problem has assumed gigantic proportions today but its origin must be traced to the beginning of modern education in India.

2 When the modern system of education was fashioned for the country, sufficient attention was not paid to our needs and ideals. There was no National Government and hence the system of education that was built up looked more to the needs of the Government than to the needs of the people of the country. Though the East India Company, on becoming the rulers of the country, accepted the need of providing education in the modern sciences, the main need of the Company was to train up a number of English-educated persons who could help it in carrying on the administration of the country. Education was therefore organised to ensure the supply of an adequate number of English-educated Indians, and the attention of the Government was concentrated on providing higher education needed for the training of such personnel. Since, however, it is impossible to have students at a higher stage unless they have gone through the stages of elementary and secondary education, the Company made some provision for education at these stages as well, but

*Speech at the twentieth annual meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, November 9, 1953*

the emphasis was nevertheless on higher education and the other stages were subsidiary and subservient to it.

3 So long as the number of persons educated in English was not larger than that required by Government, there was no problem of the educated unemployed. This situation continued till the beginning of the 20th century. An English-educated Indian was then almost sure of a job but already a situation was developing when the supply of Indians with university education was tending to become larger than the demand. Government service could not absorb all educated Indians nor had there been any development of commerce and industry which could profitably use such personnel. In the last few decades, this problem had steadily become more acute. We therefore find a growing volume of criticism against the prevalent system of education and one  
4 cannot deny that this criticism is, to a large extent, justified. If the result of education is to create a situation where society is not able to utilise the services of the educated there is obviously some defect which must be remedied. Increasing stress is now being placed on technical education but the position has not eased as there is no clear picture of how the national industries would develop. The result is that there is growing unemployment among persons educated not only in the academic disciplines but also in various technical subjects. We find that the surplus over requirements is increasing every day. Since there is no alternative mode of utilising this body of educated personnel, the  
5 result is a growing volume of dissatisfaction in society and a sense of frustration among young men and women who have received the highest training available in the country.

It is, of course, true that if we consider India's total population, the number of persons who are receiving higher education is by no means large. If only 3.5 lakhs of students are in the universities in a population of over 350 millions, no one can say that the number of university students is too great. Since, however, the present state of the country's development in agriculture, industry and commerce does not enable us to provide gainful employment even for this small number, it has become a burden for  
6 society. Today, our universities are like factories which are turning out products that do not conform to the demands of the society in either number or quality. It is therefore necessary to carry out changes in higher education which will, by carrying

out improvements in both directions, enable society to utilise the talent and training of the men and women who are receiving education beyond the school stage.

The need for educational reform has been voiced from every side but those who plead for such reform do not generally have any clear or concrete picture before them. There is a general desire that something should be done for the reform of education but few know what that "something" ought to be. It is therefore necessary to survey the whole field of education and prepare a comprehensive plan of positive reconstruction of education so that we can maintain, for the country, the progress that has been envisaged after the attainment of independence.

I would in this context like to place before you my conception of the function of education in society. Every individual has a right to an education that will enable him to develop his faculties and live a full human life. Such education is the birthright of every citizen. A State cannot claim to have discharged its duty till it has provided for every single individual the means to knowledge and self-betterment. For education up to this standard, the question of requirements of society does not arise, nor can we provide facilities only in accordance with the existing demands. Every individual, unconditionally and without qualifications, is entitled to education up to this stage. To my mind, the requisite standard for such education is the secondary stage and I am convinced that regardless of the question of employment, the State must make available to all citizens the facilities of education up to the secondary stage.

Beyond this stage, the position is somewhat different. When we consider the facilities for higher education in a State, we must match the facilities to the needs of society. Any maladjustment between demand and supply at this stage would create problems which the State must at all costs seek to avoid. Apart from any other reason, the provision of higher education is so expensive that no State can afford to increase the number of persons receiving such education beyond what it can absorb. In the field of economics, there is always a close correlation between demand and supply. Any deviation from such correlation leads to social crises. In the field of higher education, we must accept the same law and regulate the supply according to the demands of society.

Since the attainment of independence, the Government of

India have been conscious of the need of preparing a comprehensive blue-print for educational reconstruction. Some steps in that direction have already been taken. You are aware that during these five years we have appointed two high-power commissions to enquire into the problems of university and secondary education and make recommendations for their improvement and reform. The problem of elementary education has also been repeatedly considered, and there is a consensus of opinion that it should be of the basic pattern. The Government have already taken a decision in this behalf, and the time has come when similar decisions must be taken in the field of university and secondary education.

I have already said that the provision of secondary education must be universal and without any reference to any special needs of society. This, however, demands a reform of the system which will enable the vast majority of the people to find in it a satisfying and complete stage of education. [The Commission whose report was recently published and which you are going to consider today has recommended that secondary education should be reorganised. It must be the completion of education for the vast majority of people. At present it is only a stepping stone to education in the universities. In future it must be for the majority the entrance to life in various industries, crafts and professions and serve as an entrance to higher education only for a select minority. For a proper and healthy development of society, it is necessary that the vast numbers who are in elementary and secondary schools accept the responsibility of various traditional occupations in accordance with their taste, aptitude and training. There must also be unambiguous recognition by society that all professions are socially valuable and a person is to be honoured if he performs the duties of his station with competence and sincerity. If we are to ensure equal respect for various professions and provide that the majority seek such professions at the end of secondary stage of education, it is necessary to reorganise secondary education to provide for a variety of diversified courses. I think that one of the most valuable recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission is the insistence that every student at the secondary level must learn some craft irrespective of the fact whether he or she aims at adopting it as a profession or not.

Such a reorganisation of secondary education presupposes and will be facilitated by a further expansion and improvement of basic education. I have already stated that it is an accepted policy of the Government that education at the elementary level shall be of the basic pattern. The real object of basic education is to train up children as members of a community and develop in them habits of co-operative action for the social good. While the ideals of basic education have been accepted by the Centre and the States, I regret to say that the implementation of the programme has not been as rapid as we would wish. Greater emphasis must be placed on the early conversion of all elementary education to the basic pattern, but we must, at the same time, remember that this can succeed only if basic education is conceived in an imaginative and creative way. One of the reasons for the inadequate response of the State and the community to the appeal of basic education has been the rigidity of outlook of some of the advocates of this pattern of education. We have to recognise that all education is and must always be an experiment. Basic education is a great experiment and we have to recognise the fact that it has not yet been carried out on a sufficiently wide basis. We must be prepared to develop, modify and adapt it to meet the divergent needs of town and village, of industrial and agricultural areas and of the different parts of the country, some of which are coastal, some mountainous and some riparian and some arid or semi-arid. We must also recognise that there are differences in taste and aptitude of children and there are some who are more practical-minded while others have a greater predilection for abstract or artistic activities.

The most important consideration for the reform of university education appears to be to limit the number of students who enter their portals. I have already said that the present number of such students cannot be regarded as excessive but we have to ensure that with the expansion of elementary and secondary education there is no inordinate increase in these numbers till the necessary agricultural, industrial and commercial development has taken place to sustain a larger number of highly trained personnel. The chief aim of university education must therefore be consolidation and improvement.

One of the important measures for reform of university education is the need to dissociate the possession of a degree from the

- ① conditions of service. At present, nobody can hope to get a responsible post without a degree. The result is that everyone wants to enter a university, not for the pursuit of knowledge but in order to secure a passport to a job. The result of such insistence has been that instead of an emphasis on study and self-improvement, educational institutions have tended to emphasise the securing of a degree by some means or other. Not only have educational standards been lowered and all kinds of malpractices encouraged but students have missed the very purpose of education and concentrated on the acquisition of a degree without considering the means to it. It is not surprising that in this background students
- 2 have continually pressed for an increase in the percentage of passes. The universities also have consciously or unconsciously fallen in line and without adequate attention to standards striven to increase the number of passes in various examinations. There has been, in consequence, a slackness both in admission to the universities and in examinations conducted by them.
- ② After considering all aspects, it is today my considered judgment that, except for professional services, the possession of a degree should not be a pre-requisite for appointment to government service. I can understand that we may have to make an exception in the case of professional jobs. In the case of an engineer, a medical man, a technician or a teacher, it is not enough that the practitioner has merely the necessary theoretical knowledge. In their case, the discipline of studying such subjects for a number of years under proper guidance and supervision is essential for the successful performance of their duties. Leaving aside such professional services, I do not see any justification for insisting on a degree for appointment to other posts, especially where such posts are filled by the Public Service Commissions on the results of examinations specially conducted for the purpose. I realise that the Union Public Service Commission or the State Public Service Commissions, as constituted today, cannot cope adequately with the volume of work which will devolve on them
- 3 if this proposal is implemented, but we can meet this difficulty by establishing two or more Boards for the recruitment of personnel at different levels. It appears to me almost self-evident that since such Boards do, in any case, conduct examinations for recruitment to the services, the demand for the possession of a degree is very largely unnecessary. For example, in the case of jobs for

5 which it is necessary today for a candidate to be a B.A., we may lay down that a candidate's general ability and knowledge should be equal to that of a graduate, so that while we ensure that we get the right people for right jobs, the present unhealthy emphasis on degrees will be replaced by that on ability.

6 With the increase in the number of pupils at the elementary and secondary stage, this will mean that a smaller proportion will be provided with facilities for education at the higher stage. The corollary to this is that ability, and ability alone, must be the criterion for entry into the universities and other institutions of higher learning. Today very often it is the financial position of the family which decides whether a student is to go to the university or not. With limitation of numbers, we must ensure that poverty is not a ban on entering a university. This demands a much larger provision of stipends and scholarships for meritorious students. The additional expenditure will have to be met by the State and we must explore different alternatives to find the necessary resources. One suggestion which occurs to me is that the less meritorious but more affluent student may be required to pay higher fees. In any case the fees in our universities are exceedingly low. There is a case for raising these fees provided the number of scholarships and stipends are simultaneously increased to ensure that poor but meritorious students are not shut out of the universities.

7 It appears to me that increasing emphasis will have to be placed on providing higher education in the field of agriculture, medicine, engineering, technology and science. This does not, however, mean that we can afford to neglect the humanities. No nation can survive if it neglects the discipline of the spirit. We must therefore ensure that the increasing emphasis on science and technology does not lead to any reduction in the facilities for education in the liberal arts. The Government of India are fully aware of the importance of encouraging higher education in all these fields, and a small beginning has been made by providing a number of scholarships to encourage research in science and industry, and you will be glad to hear that from the current year it is proposed to institute similar scholarships for research and further studies in the humanities also.

8 The educational picture I have is that of universal education of the basic pattern for all children of school age, followed by a

diversified secondary education. Thereafter, we must have, for a select minority, facilities for higher education in all fields of arts and science and see that this is of the highest standard.

We have been stressing for years the need for educational reform, but so far no practical step could be taken in this direction. We can no longer afford to delay and must immediately set in motion an effective machinery for reform. The University Education Commission's Report has been with us for the last four years and we have recently received the Report of the Secondary Education Commission as well. We must now seriously consider how best to implement the recommendations of these two Commissions as soon as possible. I would like you to give first priority to this question in your discussions.

It was important in this connection to create an effective and permanent agency to supervise the standards of university education and to co-ordinate them. Accordingly, the Government of India are setting up a University Grants Commission of which the formal announcement will be made very soon. The Commission will be a statutory body. The necessary Bill will be presented in Parliament in the coming budget session. But since it is necessary that the Commission should begin to function without delay, the Government have decided to set it up immediately on the basis of a Resolution passed last year. After the Bill is passed, the Commission's scope and powers will be extended in conformity with it and its composition enlarged.

106



## UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

I am glad to welcome you to the first meeting of the University Grants Commission.

In accordance with one of the recommendations of the Central Advisory Board of Education, the Government of India decided in 1945 to set up a University Grants Committee. The functions of this Committee were confined to the three Central Universities and it was only an advisory body. There were several non-officials who were members but they acted on a part-time basis and there was only one whole-time officer who acted as Secretary for the Committee. With this limited personnel and the circumscribed powers, it was not surprising that the University Grants Committee was not able to make any effective contribution to the development of University education. In 1947, the Committee was re-constituted with somewhat enlarged membership but since the functions and the official assistance remained more or less the same, this Committee also did not prove effective.

In 1952, the Government of India therefore decided to set up a re-constituted University Grants Commission with a full-time Chairman and full-time Secretary and with enlarged membership. It was intended that this Commission should look mainly after the four Central Universities and be entrusted with the following functions :

- (1) to advise the Government on the allocation of grants-in-aid from public funds to the Central Universities;
- (2) to advise the Government on the allocation of grants-in-aid to other universities and institutions of higher learning whose case for such grants may be referred to the Commission by the Government; and
- (3) to advise the universities and other institutions of higher learning in respect of any question referred by the Government to the Commission.

After the passing of the Constitution, the Central Government

*Speech at the first meeting of the University Grants Commission, New Delhi, December 28, 1953*

was entrusted with an important responsibility in higher education in respect of the co-ordination of facilities and the maintenance of standards in the universities. The Government considered various measures for the discharge of this responsibility and came to the conclusion that it could be best fulfilled by the establishment of a Council of University Education by an Act of Parliament. A draft Bill to set up a Council of University Education was accordingly prepared and circulated to the universities in order to secure the largest possible support and co-operation from them. The draft Bill was considered by the Inter-University Board which agreed with the objects of the Bill but felt that its provisions might not lead to the desired end. Since the Government of India wanted to carry out the reforms with the greatest possible support and co-operation of the universities, it took note of these objections and convened, in April 1953, a conference of the State Education Ministers and Vice-Chancellors to consider the matter and suggest suitable measures for the purpose. This conference recommended unanimously that instead of setting up a separate body for the co-ordination of facilities and maintenance of standards, the Government should establish a University Grants Commission in terms of the University Education Commission's recommendations and allot to it the functions proposed to be delegated to the Council of University Education. The conference held that the University Grants Commission with enlarged powers and functions would be better able to co-ordinate the facilities and suggest proper measures of reform as it would be in constant touch with the various universities and be sensitive to their requirements and needs.

The Government accepted this recommendation as it itself felt that a properly constituted University Grants Commission with enlarged powers and functions could discharge these duties more effectively.

This also appeared to be in consonance with the recommendations of the University Education Commission. In its Report, the Commission had recommended that a University Grants Commission on the lines of the University Grants Committee in Great Britain should be set up as early as possible. The Scientific Manpower Committee had also recommended the provision of generous grants for the development of post-graduate facilities in the universities. The Government had accepted these recom-

mendations in principle, but on account of financial stringency no action could be taken on them at the time. After the acceptance of the Five Year Plan, it was known that some funds had been provided for the improvement of university education, and the Ministry of Education considered the time appropriate for the establishment of a University Grants Commission. Further discussions have been held by the Government to increase the quantum of these funds, particularly in view of the fact that the University Grants Commission would have to deal not merely with the four Central Universities but all the universities of India. I am happy to announce that we are now in a position to establish a statutory University Grants Commission with larger funds to look after all universities, and this Commission will also serve as an instrument of university reform. A draft Bill has been prepared, and it is hoped that this will be presented to Parliament at an early date.

The consideration of the Bill by Parliament and its enactment is likely to take some time. The Government, however, felt that in view of the growing problems of the universities, immediate action was needed. It has therefore considered it desirable to set up a University Grants Commission in accordance with the resolution of November last and allow it to start functioning immediately. This Commission will consist of five members and have as its Chairman Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar. In order to ensure that the universities do not look upon it as an external body, it has been decided to associate a number of Vice-Chancellors with it.

I am sure you will all agree that this is a momentous decision and will have far-reaching influence on the development of university education in India. I therefore want that the importance of this step and the results which we hope to attain through this Commission should be properly appreciated by the people at large. The first thing I want to make clear is that while the choice of the Chairman and the members had necessarily to be made by the Government, the Commission will be fully free and will have no interference in its day-to-day work from the Government. The second thing is that even though its findings may be in the nature of recommendations, the Government will treat these recommendations as binding and will be guided by the Commission's advice. Once the budget for the year has been approved by the Government, the Commission will be informed of the amount

available for university education. Within the limits thus fixed, the Commission will be free to allocate amounts among the universities, and the Government will be guided by such advice. Further, the Government of India will not consider the establishment of any new university or the grant of assistance to any such university established otherwise except on the recommendation of the Commission.

In order to enable the Commission to discharge its responsibilities satisfactorily, it must have full access to information, and the universities must freely supply it with any data that it requires. The Commission will examine such data and frame its recommendations which it will send to the universities or the Government in accordance with the needs of the case. Both the Government and the universities will give full consideration to its advice. The Commission will thus help, among other things, in avoiding unnecessary duplication and allow the full utilisation of our limited resources in money and personnel. It will also help the Government in realising its objective of achieving co-ordination of facilities and maintenance of standards in university education. All these, of course, greatly enhance the responsibility of the Commission, and I have no doubt it will discharge its duties to the full satisfaction of the Government and the universities.

I am happy that the Prime Minister has taken much interest in the proposal to set up the University Grants Commission and agreed to participate in its first meeting. I will now invite him to address the Commission and give it the benefit of his views.

## UNESCO AND THE EAST

120  
I am very happy to welcome all of you to this conference of the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco. My pleasure is the greater because fraternal delegates from many sister nations of Asia and Africa have accepted our invitation to attend the conference and share in its deliberations. Since the aims of Unesco can be realised only through mutual understanding and co-operation, their participation is particularly valuable. It will help them to understand the problems with which we are grappling and give us a clearer idea of the programmes we must recommend to Unesco.

It also gives me great pleasure that on the occasion of this conference, we have, among us, the Director General of Unesco and the Chairman and a Member of the Executive Board. Their participation will enable them to appreciate the problems and aspirations of a region where more than half of mankind lives. It will also give the new Director General a deeper insight into the tasks which await the organisation in this part of the world.

2  
The proposal to set up National Commissions in member-States is to be commended for many reasons. This has resulted in the establishment of a permanent agency for the working out of Unesco's ideas at many levels. While the membership of Unesco is confined only to States, it is obvious that its work must be carried out among the people. The National Commission with its close association with various non-official agencies provides a platform to disseminate Unesco's programmes in many ways. One may, in fact, say that Unesco's work is delegated to these National Commissions. To my mind, the main purpose of setting up the National Commissions was, on the one hand, to make Unesco conscious of the people's needs, and, on the other, to make the people conscious of Unesco's functions and purposes. The National Commissions are therefore the proper agencies to spread Unesco's ideas and objectives among the people. One may, in fact, go so far as to say that Unesco is active only if

*Presidential address at the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with Unesco, New Delhi, January 9, 1954*

the National Commissions are active. Similarly the National Commissions can function properly only if Unesco is active.

3 If we keep this test before us, we have to admit that the National Commissions have not always been as effective as we would wish them to be. I am not referring to the United States or some of the European countries, for I have no direct knowledge of the activities of the National Commissions in these areas. So far as the Eastern countries are concerned, by and large, they have not yet fulfilled what we expected of them. The Commissions have been set up, offices opened and staff employed, but they have not yet made their influence felt in their own countries; nor have they reflected adequately their points of view in framing Unesco's general programme. This is the feeling I have in respect of the Indian National Commission; though I am aware that our foreign friends feel that our Commission is very active. I have a feeling that many of our fraternal delegates will share this view in respect of their own National Commissions.

It is therefore necessary for us to devise methods by which National Commissions may be activated. Apart from the desire to have representatives of neighbouring countries among us, this is one of the main reasons why we have invited fraternal delegates from sister nations. It is our purpose and hope that their association may create an opportunity where representatives of the Asian and African National Commissions may meet and consider why more progress was not achieved. Such discussions will also help all of us to define more sharply the main objectives of Unesco and advise it on the programmes which are necessary to fulfil these objectives in the context of the East.

I wish, in this connection, to place before the Conference some important issues which, to my mind, have prevented a more effective implementation of Unesco's ideals and programmes. My purpose is to express the feelings of my country and other countries in the East fully and frankly. There is no suggestion of complaint in what I am going to say. In the brotherhood of Unesco, there must not be any occasion for mutual recrimination. 6 It is, however, necessary that we understand one another clearly and fully, for without such understanding we cannot co-operate in the achievement of our common goal.

The first thing I want to say is that there is a feeling throughout the East that the U.N. and its specialised agencies have not

(7) yet given to the East, the attention which it can rightfully claim. The Eastern nations feel that while in theory they are recognised as equal partners in the United Nations, the practice does not always conform to the theory. They feel that the central offices of the U.N. and allied agencies do not fully understand their problems and needs. So long as there is this feeling, it will be difficult to create whole-hearted enthusiasm for the U.N. and Unesco in these regions.

2) ✕ One of the reasons for such a feeling in the East is its recollection of the attitude which developed in the West in the 18th century. Two things happened simultaneously in that period. On the one hand, the Eastern countries reached the lowest depths of depression and, on the other, a new impulse to progress and advancement swept throughout Europe and America. The inevitable result of these developments was that the Western nations divided the world into two categories. There was, on one side, the free and superior world of the Western peoples and, on the other, the world of inferior and subject nations in Asia and Africa. Whenever the Western nations talked of human rights, they were thinking only of individuals and nations in the West. For them, such a concept had hardly any reference to Asia or Africa. In the latter half of the 18th century, first the U.S.A., and later France, promulgated the doctrine of the rights of man, but in the United States this doctrine did not apply to the negroes nor in France to the people under colonial rule. It is true that a humanitarian like ~~Jefferson~~ was conscious of the implications of these declarations. He referred explicitly to the plight of the slaves but the climate of opinion was such that even a ~~Jefferson~~ could not carry his people in this respect. The 19th century and especially its latter half saw the spread of European colonialism in Asia and Africa and an increasing awareness of human rights and dignity. This period also saw a beginning of the change in the world situation. The Eastern countries shook off their age-long torpor and began to share in a new awakening. A profound revolution has since taken place in their minds, and they are claiming equality with the Western people. With the progress of the twentieth century, there has been a further change of far-reaching import. A situation has developed where, with one or two unfortunate exceptions, the Western nations have recognised that the days of colonialism and domination are over. Today

the Eastern peoples are not prepared to co-operate except on one term, viz., on the basis of complete equality with the West. Superiority and inferiority between nations have no place in the modern world.

The recognition of equality is the basis of the United Nations. The U.N. has brought all nations on the same platform without regard to East or West. Unesco, which is one of its specialised agencies, is also working in the same spirit. I hope, I shall not be misunderstood if I say that there is, nevertheless, still a feeling among the peoples of Asia and Africa that the old ideas of superiority have not yet been completely eradicated from the Western minds. So long as there is such a feeling in Asia or Africa, Unesco's objectives cannot be fully realised. The first step should therefore be for the U.N. and Unesco to recognise the existence of such feelings in the Eastern minds and to adopt an attitude and procedure which will convince the Asian and African people that a true spirit of brotherhood, equality and co-operation has dawned on the world.

The U.N. and Unesco were set up after World War II. It was necessary in the conditions then prevailing that immediate steps should be taken for the rehabilitation of Europe. Though the war damages were not confined only to Europe, the higher priority placed on Europe was justified and could be understood. No Asian or African could object with reason to the programmes then adopted for the rehabilitation of war-devastated Europe. The position is, however, different today. European reconstruction has been largely achieved, while Asia and Africa are still waiting for effective programmes of rehabilitation and development. Asia and Africa are therefore waiting to see if Unesco will place today the same priority on work in these areas as it did on work in Europe immediately after the war.

I have already said that I am happy that the new Director General has taken this early opportunity of visiting Asia. I would like to impress upon him that there is a feeling in Asia and Africa that their needs are not considered as carefully as they have a right to expect. Even today in most of the programmes of the U.N. and Unesco, a greater importance seems to attach to the problems of Europe and South America. Unesco cannot succeed in its object so long as all parts of the world do not feel equally treated by it. We have also to consider what parts of the world



7  
are in greater need of Unesco's aid. There can be no doubt that in respect of education, culture, scientific progress and economic prosperity, Asia and Africa are far behind Europe and America. Millions are without access to literacy and education. Science has opened out prospects of immense advancement, but not for them. Their standard of life is so low that people of the Western world can hardly imagine it. In such a situation, if Asia and Africa find that more stress is laid not on their problems but on those of others, it is not surprising that there should be lack of enthusiasm for the U.N. and Unesco in these regions.

7½  
Unesco aims at the propagation of education, science and culture. If we look at the programmes of Unesco in the last six years, it becomes clear how much still has to be achieved. Some years ago Unesco accepted a most important programme in the field of fundamental education. The Asian and African countries were hopeful that this would help to spread literacy and raise the standard of life in the less developed regions of the world. It is a matter for regret that after the establishment of only two centres, one in South America and the other in Egypt, the programme was abandoned. I feel that one of the first priorities in Unesco's programme should be the establishment of more fundamental education centres in Asia and Africa. It is, however, necessary to emphasise that such centres must not be too elaborate and expensive. They must be in conformity with the requirements and resources of these regions, for only then can they serve the purpose in view.

I have referred to one reason why the Asian and African nations feel that Unesco has paid less attention to their needs. Another reason for this feeling is to be found in Unesco's attitude towards so-called international organisations. The multiplication of such organisations seems, at times, to be without sufficient justification, for they do not always seem to be concerned with the basic problems of Unesco and may be regarded more as frills on the margin. Nor do they seem to be international in the true sense. Very often their activities are confined to Europe and sometimes to only one or two countries of that continent. We, however, find that they are not only given accommodation in Unesco House but Unesco's meagre resources are dissipated in giving subsidies to them. We have to recognise that the days when Europe was equated with the world are gone for ever. 2

Today, no organisation can be regarded as truly international unless it functions in both the East and the West. India has already suggested that no organisation should be recognised by Unesco as international unless it operates in at least three continents and has at least five member-States in each continent. This view has not yet been accepted, and the result is that a number of organisations, which call themselves international but have no right to do so, eat up a substantial portion of Unesco's funds. In view of the shortage of funds and the many claims on it, Unesco must in fact make a selection out of organisations which can satisfy the conditions mentioned above. We must therefore both decide an order of priority and lay down criteria to determine the international character of organisations before Unesco gives them any aid. 3

Unesco should also consider whether there is room for economy in the administration budget of the Headquarters. I recognise that the execution of programmes cannot be carried out without adequate staff. The staff is, however, only a means to an end and cannot itself be the end. Unesco would therefore defeat its own purposes if administration ate up so much of its resources as not to leave enough for the execution of its programmes. 4

I understand that Unesco's budget for this year is approximately nine million dollars. Of this amount, more than two-thirds, viz., 6.3 million dollars is shown as provision for administration while only 2 million dollars are for the execution of programmes and 488,650 dollars for subventions to international organisations. I am aware that the charges for administration include some items connected with programmes, but even then the allocation of two-thirds of the fund to administration appears to be too glaring to escape public criticism. I am sure the new Director General is aware of this disproportion and will take early steps to ensure that a greater proportion of Unesco's limited resources are diverted from the provision of means to the achievement of ends. 5

Closely connected with this is the problem of concentration of programmes. It is generally agreed that today Unesco's programme is spread over a vast field and contains items, at least some of which cannot be regarded as basic. I, of course, concede that an international organisation with many member-States must seek within its means to satisfy all their demands. I;

nevertheless, feel that the time has come to concentrate on three or four basic programmes and devote all our funds and energy to their execution. It is surely better to accomplish one or two important projects than to attempt a dozen programmes of varying importance and leave all of them half complete. I hope that this conference will pay attention to this issue and frame a programme for the consideration of Unesco by which an order of priorities among programmes may be settled.

What I have said so far is largely negative. We should now consider what positive measures can be adopted to make the work of Unesco more effective throughout the world. I have said that Unesco should pay more attention to the feelings and needs of Asia and Africa. I will now add that Unesco must have greater access to such feelings and needs. One suggestion which occurs to me is the decentralisation of the work of Unesco and the establishment of regional centres in Asia and Africa. Just as W.H.O. has set up regional organisations which both reflect and respond to local feelings and needs, Unesco should also set up regional offices. These should be manned mainly by the people of the region, for only they can have adequate knowledge and sympathy with its problems and be able to interpret Unesco to them. 7

The execution of these programmes depends ultimately on the interests and the will of the member-States. Sometimes it is said that the limiting factor of Unesco programmes is funds. I do not fully agree. The funds themselves depend upon the interest and will of the member-States. If the member-States give greater priority to education and the programmes of peace, they can place much larger funds at Unesco's disposal. 1

In this context, I wish to draw your attention to an issue of paramount importance in the modern world. This is the question of the use of atomic power for the purposes of peace. One of the most hopeful developments in recent times has been the statement of President Eisenhower before the General Assembly of the United Nations. If the line of thought suggested by him is developed and all atomic energy placed at the disposal of the United Nations, the nightmare in which the modern world lives can come to an end. The peaceful use of atomic power would relieve the budgets of nations from the crushing burden of armaments. You are all aware that if one per cent of what is being spent on armaments today is placed at the disposal of Unesco, 2

startling developments will take place all over the world. Peaceful use of atomic power would not only release existing funds for purposes of education, science and culture but also enormously enhance such resources. We have also to consider which organ of the U.N. is best suited for the peaceful exploitation of atomic power. To my mind, this can be none other than Unesco. By its very constitution it is pledged to the application of scientific research for human advancement. In part fulfilment of this purpose, it has already decided to set up a European centre for nuclear research. Its concern with education, science and culture also makes it comparatively immune from political influence. For all these considerations, Unesco would be the agency most suited to carry out researches for the peaceful use of atomic energy.

I would also like to refer to what the Eastern countries can give to the West. The East needs from the West science and technique but it need not be only a receiver. It can also offer the West help in one very important respect. This is by the dissemination of the abiding values of Eastern culture in the West. In the West culture has often meant painting, music, literature and science. In the East it means something more. No Eastern concept of culture is complete unless it includes the values of the spirit. It is generally recognised that the West is in great need of these values. I am aware that Unesco has a programme of translation of the Eastern classics, but what I feel is that if this is done on a sufficiently wide scale, it may provide the West with just those values it lacks and needs. Unesco may thus well serve as the agency through which science and technique are brought to the East, while the values of the spirit are made available to the West.

Before I conclude I would like to mention one other issue which India has raised on several occasions and to which I myself referred when I addressed the General Conference of Unesco in 1951. This is the issue of throwing open the doors of Unesco to all countries without regard to their economic or political belief or status. Economic or political differences may divide the world into rival camps, but there is no reason why the cultural unity of mankind should not triumph over such divisions. Human culture in its real sense is one and indivisible and, as the agency for education, science and culture, Unesco must be global in its

6 approach and compass. I feel that Unesco cannot really fulfil its function until nations which now stand outside its portals join its brotherhood. The U.S.S.R., and the Chinese People's Republic are not members of Unesco and yet a large section of the world's people live in their territories. How can Unesco's role be fulfilled till these people can also share in its message of education, science and culture? It does not matter whether these countries have applied for membership to Unesco or not. It is Unesco's duty to extend to them an invitation to join its brotherhood. If they refuse, the responsibility will be theirs.

I am sorry that an accident keeps me confined to my bed and prevents me from participating in your deliberations. My thoughts are, however, with you. I have therefore placed before you in writing what I would have liked to say to you in person. I hope you will consider what I have said and formulate proposals that will advance the cause of Unesco in this region of the world. 7

I am happy that in spite of the many calls upon his time, the Prime Minister has been able to participate in our conference. I now request him to inaugurate this conference and share with us his thoughts for the peace, progress and welfare of man. 7-12

## REFORM IN EDUCATION

I expressed my regret at the last meeting that the Central Advisory Board of Education could not hold its annual session until November, but this has also had one advantage that we are meeting within three months to consider measures for the reconstruction of education in India. In the last meeting of the Board I drew your attention to some of our most important and pressing problems. What I would like the Board to do at the present meeting is to draw up a programme of reform and suggest measures which will bring them into effect without delay.

I think you will agree that reform has become urgent in two spheres of education in India. The first is the field of university education and the other of school education. So far as the reform of university education is concerned, we will have to depend mainly on the activities of the University Grants Commission which, as you know, has been functioning since December last. The Commission will be the agency through which we propose to carry out all our programmes of university reform. It consists of well-known and experienced educationists and is fully aware both of the problems the universities have to face and of its own responsibility in the matter. I am glad that the Commission has, at its very inception, started its work with despatch and taken one decision which I consider to be of basic importance.

You will agree that there can be no adequate improvement of university education till there are better qualified and satisfied professors. Until university teachers are recognised for their standard of scholarship and character, they cannot offer to the students the leadership which we expect from them. No real improvement of university education is possible nor can the universities give what we expect from them till this condition is satisfied. The Commission has therefore taken up as its very first task the question of improving the conditions of service of university teachers, and I have accepted its recommendations in this behalf.

---

*Speech at the 21st meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, February 7, 1954*

In the last meeting of the Board it was pointed out that, though the Board had accepted generally the recommendations of the University Education Commission nearly four years ago, hardly any steps had been taken for their implementation except in the case of the Central Universities. The Board therefore decided to appoint a Committee to survey the position and suggest measures for the speedy implementation of these recommendations. This Committee has submitted its report which will be one of the items for your discussion. Briefly, the Committee has recommended that immediate steps must be taken to amend various University Acts in order to reconstitute University Senates, Syndicates and Academic Councils so as to free them from intrigues and political influence. The Committee has, in this connection, placed the greatest emphasis on the method of appointment of the Vice-Chancellor and suggested that immediate steps be taken to adopt a procedure more or less in conformity with that followed by Delhi University. The Committee has also recommended (a) an improvement in the scales of salaries of university teachers, (b) the provision of Government loans to enable the universities to build students' hostels and teachers' quarters, (c) a greater emphasis on tutorial, as opposed to the lecture, method of instruction, and (d) the provision of merit scholarships to enable poor but deserving students to pursue their studies. After the Board has considered the report and made its recommendations, they will be forwarded to the University Grants Commission for necessary action.

The reform of university education is important and urgent, but from the point of view of the present needs of the country, the reform of school education is even more important and urgent. Until schools improve, university education cannot but remain unsatisfactory. Of the various stages of school education, the one which is in most urgent need of reform is that of secondary education. You will remember that the Secondary Education Commission has already surveyed this field, and you have appointed a Committee to study its recommendations and select those which ought to be put into effect immediately. The Committee has submitted its report, and it is for you to approve it with such modifications as you may consider necessary. Since the Board is the highest educational body in the country and includes among its members representatives of both the Central and the State

Governments, I am confident that any recommendations you may make will be implemented without delay. In so far as it concerns the Government of India, I can assure you that we will take immediate steps for their implementation.

As I told you at the last meeting of the Board, secondary education cannot meet the needs of the country till it is reorganised. In this connection, three things appear to me to be of great importance.

- (i) Secondary education must be so fashioned that it will be the completion of education for the majority of the people. It must not be a mere entrance to the university but be a stage complete in itself.
- (ii) Its pattern and content should be such that it may serve the needs of different groups of people with different aptitudes. It must not be cast in a rigid and cast-iron frame.
- (iii) We have accepted basic education as the pattern of education at the elementary level. Secondary education should be so modelled as to complete the process of instruction initiated at the elementary stage and train up citizens who are able to discharge their responsibilities of citizenship. The emphasis on some one craft in the Secondary Education Commission's report appears to me to be valuable from this point of view.

I am glad that the Secondary Education Commission has paid due attention to these points and they have been stressed by the Committee you appointed. I am sure that you will also consider them with the care that they deserve.

One of the major recommendations of the Committee you appointed is that the educational structure in the country should eventually consist of eight years' integrated elementary (basic) education, four years of secondary education and three years of university education. This will mean that normally a child will be in the basic (junior and senior) school till he is fourteen, and will then have four years of high school followed by a three years' course at the university leading to the Bachelor's degree. The Committee has drawn special attention to the Commission's recommendation that languages, general science, social studies and a craft should form the core subjects of secondary education for all. In addition, the Committee has given the highest priority



to the introduction of diversified courses in the following main groups :

- (1) Humanities.
- (2) Sciences.
- (3) Technical Subjects.
- (4) Commercial Subjects.
- (5) Agricultural Subjects.
- (6) Fine Arts.
- (7) Home Sciences.

The Committee has also reported that there should be one examination at the end of the secondary course. Greater emphasis should, however, be placed on periodical tests and the regular progress report of students in the curricular and co-curricular activities. The Training Colleges should not charge any tuition fees and teachers under training should be given their full salaries or stipends that will meet their expenses. Finally, the Committee has reiterated the Commission's recommendation that the higher secondary examination should be made the normal qualification for most government services.

If we accept these recommendations, as I hope you will, we must try to fix some targets, for without such targets our programmes of reform are bound to remain vague and indefinite. The Committee has reported that about five per cent of the existing secondary schools should be converted into multi-purpose schools in the course of the next two years and another ten per cent in the next five years. To me it appears that this programme of reform is slow and must be accelerated.

I agree that in any measure of educational reform, progress is bound to be slow in the beginning. The pace must, however, be steadily quickened and in the later stage we must achieve really rapid progress. I consider that the first task in the context is to define a target date for the complete reorganisation of secondary education. My own idea is that this task must be accomplished within ten years. I confess that even ten years appear to me too long and would be happy if the period could be shortened still. I hope the Board will consider the question carefully and suggest measures which may contribute to this end.

Once this general target has been set, we have to consider specific items. I have already said that I consider the target set by the Committee regarding the conversion of existing schools

into multi-purpose ones to be slow. I am of the view that at least 25 per cent of the existing schools must be so converted as early as possible. The Board may consider the suggestion and define the period in which this should be done.

The Committee has drawn our attention to the difficulty of transforming existing schools to the new pattern, and rightly pointed out that it is bound to take time. This may be true in some respects, but there are some changes like those in the curriculum and reform in examinations, where the process of reform can begin without delay. Our programme therefore ought to be that during the next two years programmes for reconstruction of curriculums and reform in examinations should be carried out on as wide a range as possible.

✓ I would now like to draw your attention to another problem of the greatest importance to the future of our education. This is the problem of students' unrest. Since the attainment of independence, there has been a marked deterioration in order and discipline among students. In the last two years, there has been one incident after another in which students have been involved. This has become a cause of national concern, and everyone who has any sense of responsibility is troubled by these developments.

What worries me most is that the extent and magnitude of students' unrest is very often without any relation whatever to its supposed cause. In recent months we have witnessed ugly developments in Lucknow and Allahabad. The trouble arose out of the question as to whether or not the membership of the University Union should be compulsory or voluntary. The university authorities were of the view that students should not be compelled to become members of the University Union. The students held the opposite view. The authorities at Lucknow later accepted the demand of the students, but there arose a new question about the constitution of the Union. I do not wish to enter here into the controversy as to the merits of the question. What grieves and surprises me is that there should be such turmoil over the question of the constitution of a students' union. It suddenly appeared as if it was not a matter between the authorities and students of a university but a conflict between two enemies who were ready to fight against each other at the slightest provocation. The students set up an Action Committee which drew up a programme of struggle. Procedures which belong to belligerents

were thus imported into university affairs. What happened later is well known to you and cannot but be a cause of the greatest sorrow to everyone who has the welfare of the country at heart.

This issue of students' unrest has now reached a stage where the Board must pay the greatest attention to it, explore its causes and suggest measures of remedy. While these events were happening in Lucknow, I called a conference which was attended by some eminent educationists and the Prime Minister. We considered the issue as carefully as we could and the conclusion to which we reached was later placed before the Congress Working Committee, which has passed a well-considered resolution in the matter. You are, no doubt, aware of this resolution, but I want the Board to give further thought to it and consider it more in its educational implications. A note on the subject has been prepared by Sri Humayun Kabir which is down for discussion in your agenda. I want you to consider this note in its different aspects and advise the Governments at the Centre and the States on the steps which must be taken if we are to check the growing indiscipline and unrest among our students. Unless this is done in time, it will threaten the foundations of our educational structure.

I will in fact go further and say that such unrest among the students strikes at the root of our national future. The student of today is the potential leader of tomorrow. He will have to sustain the social, political and economic activities of the community. If he is not properly trained and does not develop the necessary resources of character and knowledge, he cannot supply the leadership which the nation will need. We must therefore adopt measures which will eradicate the causes of students' unrest and make the universities creative centres of learning and leadership.

## LITERATURE AND LIFE

I have pleasure in welcoming you to this first meeting of the National Academy of Letters.

In 1944, the Government of India accepted, in principle, a proposal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (as it was then called) that a National Cultural Trust should be set up to encourage cultural activities in all fields. The Trust should include three academies—one in letters, one in the visual arts and one for dance, drama and music. After the National Government was established in 1947, three conferences were convened to work out in detail the implications of this proposal. The conferences agreed about the need for the academies but felt that since a National Government had been established, it was not necessary to set up a National Trust. It was, however, recommended that steps should be taken to set up the academies as autonomous bodies and provide them with the funds necessary for their work. The Government of India has accepted that recommendation.

The Government's function in this process is mainly that of a curtain-raiser. Someone has to set up the academies, and the Government has decided to do so. Once they are set up, the Government will refrain from exercising any control and leave the academies to perform their functions as autonomous institutions. The Sangeet Natak Akadami has already been established in accordance with this decision of the Government. The Academy of Fine Arts is in process of formation, and today we have met to set up what is perhaps the most important of the three.

There are some—and the Prime Minister was one of them at one stage—who expressed the view that the academies should not have been established in this fashion. They regard it as an imposition from above. They hold that the growth of the academies should have been encouraged from below. Instead of establishing an academy, the Government should have waited till there grew up in the country societies or individuals who had the necessary authority to establish the academies. Once such

---

*Speech at the first meeting of the Sahitya Akadami (National Academy of Letters), New Delhi, March 12, 1954*

academies had been set up, the Government's function should have been merely to recognise them.

I am afraid I cannot agree with this approach. Since the Renaissance, many academies have been established in Europe. Today there is hardly any country in the Western world which does not have one or more national academies. All these academies were established by the Governments under letters-patent of the Sovereigns or by legislation. There was therefore no reason why the Government of India should not take the initiative for the establishment of the academies. In fact, if we had waited for the academy to grow from below we might have had to wait till the Greek Kalends.

I should like to dwell for a moment on the meaning of the term 'academy.' We are all aware that this term was first used for the school that Plato had established. The garden in which the school was set up was named after an ancient hero 'Akademos,' and it was after him that the school came to be known as the Academy. Whatever the origin of the name, it has, in course of time, acquired a connotation of its own which, as far as we are aware, cannot be expressed by any other single word. What do we mean by an academy? Is it a school? The answer is 'No.' Is it a research institute? Again the answer is 'No.' Is it then an association of writers and authors? Still the answer is in the negative. If, however, it be asked whether it possesses the attributes of all of them, the answer must be an emphatic 'Yes.' By calling it an academy, we refer to all these facets and signify that it is at the same time a school, an institute and an association. If we were to call it a school or an institute or association only, the full significance of what we intend would remain unexpressed. An academy is, in fact, something more than any or all of them.

The academies flourished in Greece for almost 900 years until Justinian ended them by a special decree. During this period, the term 'Academy' acquired its special significance. There is no other word in any Eastern or Western language which can convey the full flavour of the academy. That is why we have resisted the temptation of a vain search for a new term and have kept the original word in its adapted form as 'Akadami,' in conformity with the requirements of Hindi pronunciation.

Today is the first day in the life of the Indian Academy of Letters. It is necessary that we should have a clear idea of the

work which it is intended to perform and the standards it will place before the world. The question of standard is, to my mind, fundamental in the concept of the academy. The Academy must lay down a standard for those who seek to be recognised as distinguished men of letters. The Academy would serve its purpose only if its standard is set as high as possible. If the standard is lowered, the very purpose of establishing the Academy is lost.

The object of the Academy is to educate public taste and advance the cause of literature. This can be done only if we maintain the highest standard. Then alone will writers aim at giving their best and create works of art which will add to the heritage of man. On this question of standard, we should, I feel, be guided by the example of the French Academy. Established by Louis XIV in 1635 with only 40 members, it has to this day refused to increase this number. The number of men in the whole of France who can achieve the status of Academician is thus only 40. Even the most distinguished men have to wait for a place in the Academy till there is a vacancy.

The result of this insistence on standard is that France regards the membership of the Academy as an earnest of immortality. To be elected to the Academy was held to be a guarantee of permanent fame. The Academy has been so exclusive that we find that even the greatest men of letters have sometimes been denied the status of members. Descartes, Pascal, Molière are all men whose distinction as men of letters is beyond dispute, but they never found a place among the Academicians. Montesquieu and Voltaire were fortunate in this respect but Rousseau never achieved the distinction. We all know the high position occupied by Encyclopaedists in the world of French letters but among them only D' Alembert and Marmontel were able to become members. Even Diderot and Helvetius found no place in the Academy.

Coming to modern times, we find that some of the greatest figures of French literature waited long and sometimes in vain to achieve the distinction. The nineteenth century is perhaps the most glorious period of modern French literature. There were, in this period, writers whose works have become classics, but, even among them, there were many who never achieved the membership of the Academy. Neither Daudet nor Maupassant nor Zola were members. Lamartine regarded himself fortunate that he was elected a member after some years' waiting. Even

the author of *Les Miserables* had to wait for ten years before he could become a member. In recent times, André Gide, who is a French writer of world-wide reputation and had received the Nobel Prize in 1947, was never a member of the Academy. If the Indian Academy of Letters does not maintain similar standards and reserve its honours only for the immortals of literature, the Academy will not be able to serve the object for which it is being established.

In framing the constitution of the Academy, these considerations were constantly before us. We saw that if we prescribed the membership of the Academy on the same basis as in the French Academy, it would have been difficult to set it up at all. We must admit that the literatures of India today have not reached a stage where 30 or 40 persons could be selected straight-away and be regarded as immortals. We have accordingly made a distinction between Members and Fellows. For membership, we have not laid down the standards prescribed for the French Academy and have considered it enough that a person should have helped in the development of literature or established his position as a man of letters. In order, however, to create the same standards as in the French Academy, we have created a separate class called 'Fellows of the Academy.' Here, as in the French Academy, only the selected will be admitted.

We considered carefully the question as to what should be the number of Fellows. We finally decided that the number of Fellows in the Sahitya Akadami must not exceed 21. This does not, however, mean that there will be necessarily 21 in the Academy. It only means that there will never be more than 21 Fellows. In the Sangeet Natak Akadami, where the limit is higher, namely, 30, there are at present only seven Fellows. For the Academy of Letters, my feeling is that the number will perhaps be less, for the selection is to be done with even greater care.

So far as the constitution of the Academy is concerned, it may be briefly described as follows. All the fourteen languages enumerated in the Constitution of India have their representatives on the Academy. There are also representatives of the States, the universities and of the Government of India. In addition, there are eight persons nominated by the Minister for Education for their services to the cause of literature. All the three academies have a constitution more or less on this pattern.

You will find that while all the languages named in the Indian Constitution are represented in the Academy, English does not find a place there. You will agree that the Academy would have remained incomplete if some distinguished writers of English had not been included. We have to admit that for the last 100 or 150 years, English has served not only as a vehicle of knowledge and learning but also as the medium of expression for many of our finest writers. This was inevitable, for English had achieved such a pre-eminence that the status of an author was not assured till he had expressed himself through its medium. Tagore, who is the greatest poet of modern India, had been writing in Bengali ever since his childhood but his fame was not fully recognised even in his own province till the English version of *Gitanjali* declared him as one of the greatest poets of the world. Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to national awakening and the achievement of independence is acknowledged universally. His writings in Gujarati are, however, known only to the people in Gujarat. It was his writings in English that enabled him to evoke a new political consciousness and give a revolutionary turn to Indian life. Similarly, Aurobindo Ghosh's claim to distinction rests upon the quality of his writings in English.

I have, for some time, been thinking how best to encourage the development of creative literature in the different Indian languages. Some of the State Governments are no doubt working to this end, but I felt that it was necessary to take measures which would secure an all-India recognition for writers in different languages. I asked the Ministry to examine the issue, and it has been suggested that one way of such encouragement is to award prizes or other distinction to writers of merit. A scheme which has been accepted by the Government is to give prizes of Rs. 5,000 every year for the best work in each of the 14 languages mentioned in the Schedule to the Constitution. Every year, the work of the three preceding years will be surveyed and a prize given to the writer of the best work. No author will be entitled to get a prize a second time, for I am sure you will agree that such a scheme should benefit as many people as possible. The awards will be made on the recommendations of the Academy of Letters.

One thing I would like to make clear is that these prizes will be given for recognised merit, and no one should apply for them.



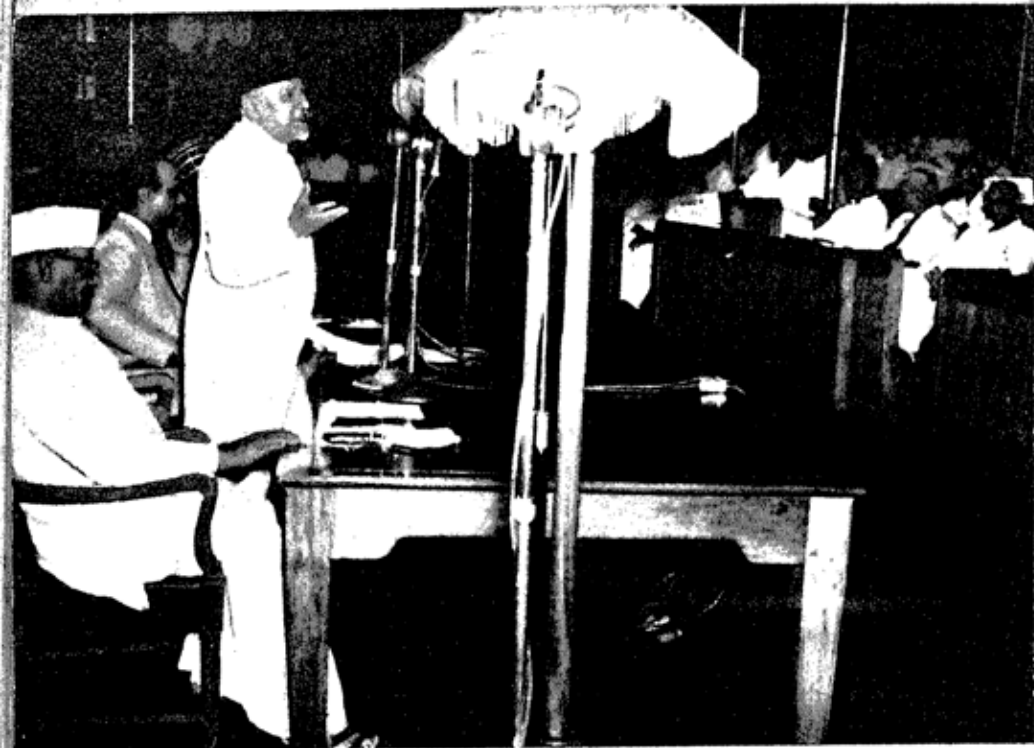
It is my hope that the first prizes will be announced before the end of the calendar year.

I have already said that the Government's function in establishing the Academy is that of a curtain-raiser only. This also applies to the appointment of its first Chairman. The Government of India have accordingly selected its first Chairman but hereafter it will be the Academy which will appoint its own office-bearers.

I am glad that Sri Jawaharlal Nehru has agreed to serve as the first Chairman of the Academy. He has been appointed not because he is the Prime Minister but because he has carved out for himself a distinctive place as a writer and author. The Committee which framed the constitution of the Academy submitted three names, of which the first was that of Pandit Nehru. The Ministry of Education offered the Chairmanship to him, as it was beyond dispute that from every point of view he is the best man we could have selected for the first Chairmanship of India's National Academy of Letters.



*At the inauguration of the Sahitya Akadami (National Academy of Letters), New Delhi, March 1954*



*Inaugurating the Lalit Kala Akadami (National  
Academy of Art), New Delhi, August 1954*

## THE ROLE OF VISUAL ART

I am happy to welcome you all on the occasion of the inauguration of the National Academy of Art. Some of you will remember that when I addressed the All India Conference on Arts at Calcutta on August 29, 1949, I told you that at the recommendation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Government had decided to set up three academies, viz., an Academy of Letters to deal with Indian languages and literatures, an Academy of the Visual Arts and Architecture and an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music. The Academy of Dance, Drama and Music was accordingly set up in 1953 under the name Sangeet Natak Akadami. Similarly the Academy of Letters was set up under the title Sahitya Akadami in March this year. With the inauguration today of the Academy of Art under the title Lalit Kala Akadami, the programme for the establishment of the National Cultural Trust, which I had set before myself, is now complete.

I have always been of the view that apart from the intrinsic value of art for its own sake, it is an essential element in education as it develops the feelings and aesthetic sensibilities of man. I may remind you of what I said at that conference in Calcutta in defence of art in education and life :

"It is today realised that no education can be complete which does not pay proper attention to the development and refinement of the emotions. This can be done best through the provision of facilities for training the sensibilities by the practice of one of the fine arts. Apart from the general question of developing the finer aspects of personality through artistic education, there is also the immediate utility of such education in developing our manual skill and perceptive sensibility. It is recognised today that education at pre-primary or nursery stage can be best imparted through training the child in the matching of colours, shapes and sizes. This releases the creative instinct

---

*Address at the first meeting of the Lalit Kala Akadami (National Academy of Art), New Delhi, August 5, 1954*

in the child and thus diverts his superfluous energy from merely destructive channels into those of social behaviour and decorum. Thus, whether from the point of view of the training of the emotions or refinement of sentiments or development of manual skill and creative urge, the importance of art as an element of education cannot be overemphasised."

I may tell you briefly what the Ministry has tried to do in furthering the development of art since the holding of the All India Conference. One of the recommendations of that conference was that regional surveys of indigenous art, including folk art, painting, sculpture, bronze-casting, etc., should be undertaken so that authoritative handbooks concerning art designs and techniques and methods and material used in India could be published. The Government of India accepted that recommendation and awarded five scholarships of the value of Rs. 3,500 each for the survey of indigenous art in Madras, Bombay, West Bengal, Orissa, Jammu and Kashmir.

The Government also set up a body called the Bharat Kala Samiti to advise the Government in all matters pertaining to art and to promote the cause of art in the country until the establishment of the National Academy of Art. The Samiti has decided to sponsor a critical and comprehensive history of Indian art and has taken in hand the immediate publication of a Moghul album, a contemporary art album and a set of colour picture postcards. It is expected that these three volumes will be published before the end of the year. The Samiti is also considering the publication of a representative volume of Indian paintings, ranging from the earliest Ajanta frescoes to modern times. At the instance of Unesco, we have assisted the New York Graphic Society in bringing out an album of 32 colour reproductions of Ajanta paintings.

In accordance with another resolution of the conference, a fund called the National Art Treasure Fund has been created with contributions from the Central and State Governments and private organisations and individuals.

The Government have also instituted a system of scholarships for young workers in art and other cultural fields. The object of this scheme is to provide effective encouragement to young artists in order to give them suitable facilities for the development of

their talents in the right direction. Applications for the first batch of such scholarships have been received and the selection of suitable candidates will be made in the near future.

I must also make a special mention of the establishment in August 1949 of the National Museum in Rashtrapati Bhavan. Here we have collected, under one roof, specimens of Indian art from the earliest times to this day.

Another important event in the world of art was the inauguration of the National Gallery of Modern Art in March this year. Jaipur House was acquired for the purpose and some of the masterpieces of modern Indian painting are displayed there. Efforts are constantly being made to make the collection richer and more representative. On the occasion of the opening of the National Gallery, an All India Exhibition of contemporary sculpture was organised at Jaipur House and prizes awarded to artists who had done distinguished work in this field.

In addition to these activities of the Ministry, voluntary efforts in the field of art have also been supported by suitable grants to various organisations. Special mention may be made of the grants paid to *Shankar's Weekly* for the annual organisation of an International Exhibition of Children's Paintings since 1952. A selection from those paintings has been published in an album entitled *Child Art*. We also arranged for an exchange of paintings between Indian and Japanese children. A grant was made to Rabindra Bhavan, Visva-Bharati, to organise exhibitions of Rabindranath Tagore's paintings in Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Grants have also been made to the Indian Academy of Fine Art, Amritsar, and the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, New Delhi.

Of special interest was the exchange of exhibitions of paintings and other forms of visual art with foreign countries. Since 1949 exhibitions from China and the U.S.S.R. have visited India while Indian exhibitions have been sent out to the U.K., Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, China, Japan, Australia, the U.S.A., Canada and the U.S.S.R. A special tribute is due in this connection to Unesco which brought to India an exhibition of the paintings of Leonardo Da Vinci, a travelling exhibition of colour reproductions of paintings from 1860 to date, an exhibition on "Education and Peace," another on "Man against the Jungle" and a scientific exhibition: Our Senses and the Knowledge of the World. We have also

participated this year in the International Art Exhibition in Venice and are helping to send an exhibition of Indian Art through the Ages to several middle Eastern, European and South American countries as well as to the U.S.A.

I have, however, always held that in the field of art the role of the Government must be secondary. The Government should, no doubt, take an interest in the development of art but the truth is that art cannot really flourish until there are strong non-official agencies working for it. This is the main reason for the setting up of the Lalit Kala Akadami which, though established by the Government, will work as an autonomous body and without any interference from the Government in its activities. It is true that it is being set up by the Government but this is only because some one had to take the initiative in setting it up. Now that this has been done, the work of the Government is over and from now on it will be your function as members of the Akadami to provide inspiration to artists throughout the country.

I may very briefly describe the constitution of the Lalit Kala Akadami. It is a corporate body and will work through a General Council, an Executive Board, a Finance Committee, and any other committee or committees set up by the General Council or the Executive Board.

The General Council will include, besides officers of the Academy, nominees of the Central and State Governments, representatives of recognised art organisations, eminent artists and the Directors of the National Museum and the National Art Gallery.

The General Council will elect the Vice-Chairman and the members of the Executive Board, and the Finance Committee will approve the budget and appoint auditors.

The Executive Board will be responsible for the supervision and control of the work of the Academy and its office, while the Finance Committee will consider the budget estimates, make recommendations to the Executive Board and prescribe the limit for annual expenditure.

I referred earlier to the assistance received from Unesco in bringing to India an exhibition of European art. Unesco has now taken the initiative in organising a regional Seminar on "Arts and Crafts in General Education and Community Life" in Tokyo this very month. The object of this Seminar is to study ways and means whereby arts and crafts can enrich general edu-

cation and contribute to the amenities of community life. I am particularly happy that Sri D. P. Roy Chowdhury, our first Chairman of the Lalit Kala Akadami, has been invited by Unesco to serve as the Director of this first Asian Seminar on Art.

It appears to me right and proper that the Unesco Seminar should lay such stress on the place of art in everyday life. Here in India we have always recognised that art is an essential element in the culture of the individual and the community. We have our simple village women who do beautiful *alpans* and decorate their homes. We have our village craftsmen who weave designs and patterns that are the envy of trained artists in the sophisticated countries of Europe and America. If we ask how even the poor in India have developed such pure taste in art, the answer to my mind is that this is due to the splendid architectural and sculptural work we find in our religious buildings. From earliest times, the temple was not only a place of worship but a place of beauty. During the Middle Ages magnificent mosques were built which combined great nobility with great simplicity. The common man who was continually seeing these splendid works of art could not but develop a pure and refined taste. A country which produced Konarak or the Brihadeswara Temple or the Taj Mahal had not only a high conception but also inimitable skill in art. The minds which conceived these noble edifices, the hands which shaped them and the patronage which made their construction possible evoke our admiration to this day.

The patronage to art which in former days was extended by kings and nobles will have to be given by the people and the State in contemporary India. I am attracted by a system which, I understand, is in vogue in Sweden. Under this system whenever any public building is constructed, a percentage of the estimated expenditure is earmarked for sculpture, painting and other decoration. I have under consideration a similar proposal so that in future all public buildings, constructed with State funds, may provide opportunities to our artists of today to display their talent.

I need hardly repeat to an audience like the present one, the record of India's glorious heritage of art. In the field of architecture, she has monuments which challenge comparison with the best anywhere in the world. Her sculptures have a plastic quality and vitality that have evoked the admiration of the most carping critics. Her paintings, whether they are the ageless frescoes of



Ajanta or the exquisite miniatures of the Middle Ages, are a precious heritage for the whole world. Not only in such traditional works of art, but also in articles of everyday use—made of clay or stone, brass or ivory, silver or gold, or bamboo, cane or wicker—her artists and artisans display wonderful skill.

The Lalit Kala Akadami, which is being set up today, must work to preserve the glorious traditions of the past and enrich them by the work of our modern artists. It must also seek to improve standards and refine public taste. If it serves this purpose, and I have every hope it will, the Academy will have justified itself to India and the world.

I am glad to announce that the Government have decided to give land and to provide funds for the construction of suitable buildings for the three academies. I hope that in a year's time these academies will be lodged in their own buildings.

## S P O R T S

I have put you to the inconvenience of coming all the way to Delhi in this weather, but I am sure that in view of the importance of the subject we are going to discuss, you will not consider any apology necessary. I also hope that the results which this conference may achieve will more than make up for the inconvenience caused you.

As you probably know, the Government of India have initiated several schemes for Youth Welfare. Something has already been achieved within a short period but a great deal remains to be done. With regard to games and sports, I have been watching the scene for some time now with increasing concern but I have so far abstained from intervening. I believe that, in such matters, we should rely on voluntary effort and self-help rather than on arrangements, howsoever good, imposed from above. I understood that certain efforts were being made by persons actually concerned with sports organisations to set their house in order, and I therefore thought it best for the Government to await the result of those efforts and, if those efforts bore fruit, to give all possible support to the new arrangements. It appears, however, that conditions are such that they are difficult to reform and that it will in any case be a long process. I do not wish to go into the rights and wrongs of it, I cannot, however, ignore the fact that not only are we far behind even much smaller countries in games and sports but also that our general standards are poor and our interests meagre. Sports and games have a very important role to play in the building up of a healthy nation but one cannot say that they are playing that role in our country at all effectively. Indeed, I am not sure whether the popular interest in games and sports was not greater and standards comparatively higher thirty or forty years ago.

It is against this background that I have invited you today to consider what measures should be adopted to improve the existing state of affairs. I have deliberately not put before you any

fixed agenda as I would like you to feel free to raise whatever points you may consider specially important. It will, of course, not be possible for this conference to go into details, and we can perhaps leave that to a smaller body which may be set up to advise the Government from time to time on all matters concerning sports and games. Here we can usefully confine ourselves to a discussion of the main questions.

We must consider the resources, both human and material, at our disposal and examine how they can be utilised to the best advantage. As for the human material, I see no reason to believe that it is in any way inferior to the human material in any other country, but we must devise effective means for its mobilisation and training. It is in my opinion a question of organisation. You, with your rich and intimate experience of sports, can no doubt suggest the most effective concrete steps to take. It appears to me, however, that the greatest need is to have not only effective but clean organisations which will be free from defects that one hears so much about. The sports organisations must command general confidence and respect; they must therefore not merely be good but also appear to be good, so that their leadership is accepted and the largest possible numbers come into the fold of sports. We must draw into sports, leaders and organisers who are genuinely devoted to sports and eliminate those who merely seek personal advantage.

Another point which I would like to emphasise in this connection is that while the Government should undoubtedly do all that lies in their power to encourage and support sports, the main responsibility must remain with those institutions and organisations which are actively engaged in the work, so that sports rest on voluntary, spontaneous and popular effort.

The main problem therefore appears to be to evolve an organisation which will (a) be democratic, resting on the willing and enthusiastic endeavour of the largest number of persons possible, (b) build on the good work already done by the existing organisations and (c) be both efficient and on healthy lines, ensuring fairplay and the spirit of sportsmanship, the participation of the largest number from the lowest levels (school and district) upwards and good competitive standards at all levels.

A very important part of the problem of organisation is the provision of coaching and training facilities. I am aware that

certain *ad hoc* coaching schemes were initiated in the past; unfortunately they were not only too few but also inadequate in their approach. It is not enough that some hurried coaching arrangements should be made in preparation for a particular competitive event. Not only does it fail to yield the desired result but it also places the wrong emphasis on competitive events. While we would all be gratified by the success of Indian participants in international contests, what is really important is not success in particular competitive events but the building up of a nation physically fit and imbued with the spirit of sportsmanship. Even from the point of view of competitive events, real success can only be achieved if specialised coaching is based on wide playing facilities and training arrangements from the lowest level upwards, i.e. from school onwards.

The two main problems of material resources are those of playgrounds and finances. Here also it is the duty of the Government to give the utmost help possible but I must again emphasise that no constructive endeavour of a self-respecting people can depend entirely on Government help. While therefore the Government and the other public authorities must be urged to make their due contribution, the various sports organisations must continually explore all possible means of strengthening themselves by their own efforts and by enlisting wide popular support. They must, in other words, try to stand on their own legs and look to the Government only to supplement their efforts.

I have put before you briefly some of my own thoughts on the subject and I now invite you to a full and frank exchange of ideas, so that before we disperse we not only have a clear picture of the problems before us but we also have a reasonably definite plan of tackling these problems. As I have said before, I do not think it will serve any useful purpose to find fault with others in a negative way. We should acknowledge that, in spite of severe handicaps and limitations, many organisations and individuals among you and elsewhere have rendered valuable service in the cause of sports, but we should also acknowledge that the total picture at present is far from gratifying. Having done that, we should evolve concrete and constructive steps to improve the present position as speedily as possible. As for myself, I shall listen to you eagerly to find out in what ways the Government can help, and I assure you that your suggestions will receive the fullest and the

most earnest consideration of the Government. I am personally determined to do everything possible, with your co-operation, to give our youth a better deal than they have had so far.

## TECHNICAL EDUCATION

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to the 9th annual meeting of the All India Council for Technical Education.

Since our last meeting, the constitution of the Council has been further revised to ensure better co-ordination in the work of the Committees and the Boards of the Council. I am happy that we have, with us here today, the Chairmen of the Regional Committees and the Chairmen of the Boards of Studies of the Council.

In view of the importance of improving the quality of higher education, the Central Government decided last year to set up a University Grants Commission. This body has been entrusted not only with the task of assessing the financial needs of the universities but also with taking other appropriate steps for the maintenance and improvement of standards. I am glad to note that friendly relations have already been established between the University Grants Commission and the Council in the field of technical education. The University Grants Commission has accepted the suggestion of the Co-ordinating Committee to utilise the machinery of the Council for the assessment of the needs of the Technological Departments of the universities. I welcome on the Council, the Chairman of the University Grants Commission as an *ex-officio* member.

We are meeting today after a lapse of more than a year and a half. During this period, our Co-ordinating Committee has been active in carrying out the policy and programme laid down by us at the last meeting. The successful implementation of the Five Year Plan on the general lines indicated by the Council is, in no small measure, due to the untiring efforts of the Regional Committees and other Special Committees.

It is heartening to see that as a result of the work of these Committees of the Council, before the close of the first Five Year Plan period, we shall have in the country a fair number of post-graduate courses in engineering and technology as also arrangements for advanced work and research. We shall also have a network of

facilities in management studies, a subject which has assumed great importance in recent times. An Administrative Staff College and a National Institute of Management will also have been set up largely through the efforts of industry and commerce. At least three, if not more, of the regional schools of printing technology will also have been functioning. The provision for architectural studies will have been expanded considerably and a Central School of Town and Regional Planning will have been established on firm foundations. As you all know, in the past we have had to send a large number of our students abroad for study in these subjects.

Last, but by no means least, the needs of all the existing institutions, preparing students for the first degree and diploma courses, will not only have been assessed but the majority of them will have largely completed their programme of development. All this is, by no means, small achievement when one considers that the work was started only after February 1953 when the Council gave general directives on new developmental projects.

The increasing interest, which the State Governments are taking in the work of the Council, is evident from the reports of the work done by the Regional Committees as also the items put forward for consideration of the Council by some of the State Governments. I am glad that the State Governments are working hard to improve the provision for technical education within their States. I am sure that your deliberations on the points raised by them will help us to formulate policies and ensure co-ordinated development.

The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, has, as you will remember, been established in terms of the recommendations of the Council. Its progress has been remarkable. It has on its rolls today 1090 students receiving instruction for the first degree and post-graduate courses in various branches of engineering and technology. Some are also doing advanced work and research. Its Board of Governors has decided to introduce a number of courses at the post-graduate level commencing with the July 1955 session. Having regard to all the developments that have taken place in the country, the Board has drawn up a plan under which the Institute will ultimately have 1800 students in all—1200 for the first degree courses and 600 for post-graduate courses and advanced work. I have every hope that, in course of time,

this Institute will develop into an institution of which India may well be proud.

One of the important items on the agenda is the preparation of the 'Second Five Year Plan'. I realise that it has come soon after the framing of detailed schemes to implement the First Five Year Plan. The work done by the Council during the brief space of a year and ten months has, however, brought to the forefront the various problems of technical education. We are therefore in a position to indicate the general lines of development for the five-year period, 1956-61. Although final decisions have not yet been taken, the general expectation is that the Second Five Year Plan will be an "Industrial Plan." It is important therefore that we should plan ahead and be ready to meet its demands. Since it takes three to four years to train technical personnel, it is necessary to decide immediately what steps to take to speed up our machinery of training to cope with the possible requirements for the next five years.

Tentative suggestions in regard to what might be included in the Second Five Year Plan have been made in the notes circulated to you. I think the time has come when we should seriously consider the setting up of more higher technological institutions. The site for the Western Institute has already been acquired and the Government of Bombay has expressed its eagerness to go ahead with the project. The Central Government therefore propose to start the preliminary work so that the second Institute may come into being with the commencement of the Second Five Year Plan.

I also feel that greater activity, both in intensity and scope, is necessary in the field of co-operative projects with the industry. Apprenticeship training schemes at all levels have not yet received the attention they deserve. In this, the active interest and co-operation of the industry are the forerunners of any successful schemes. The Government has already accepted the recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission to provide diversified courses at the secondary level. Such courses can be useful only if opportunities are available to children leaving school to go into industry as learner-workers or apprentices having at the same time facilities for part-time instruction in technical schools. Such schools could be set up by industry. Provision should also be made for such part-time instruction in the existing



engineering colleges, which are at present doing mostly full-time work.

I am glad to note that in so far as graduate apprenticeship training is concerned, it has been possible to secure fairly good response from the industry. All the same, what has been done is not enough. Much more will have to be done at all levels. I take this opportunity of making a special appeal to the representatives of the industry and commerce on the Council and the industrialists outside to participate fully in the apprenticeship schemes, which must be worked out and put into effect.

Of late, I have seen tendencies, particularly amongst the Government Departments, to set up separate institutions for their staff members. Their plea is that the establishment of such training centres will lead to greater efficiency than can be obtained if training were arranged in the existing institutions. I think this matter requires further consideration, and I would request the Council to devise the necessary measures to see that the special needs of the various organisations are adequately fulfilled by the existing institutions. If this requires the provision of special courses, expert staff or additional equipment, we should be prepared to sponsor them. I am sure that such arrangements would prove beneficial both to the organisations and the institutions concerned. They should help to tone up the standards at the institutions and make them alive to the needs of the industry, commerce and other technical departments. A further advantage would be that the job could be done more economically in this way. This is by no means an unimportant consideration in our training programmes. Short-term refresher courses would go a long way in meeting such needs and I have no doubt that the Council will direct its attention to this problem.

## A YEAR OF PROGRESS

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this 22nd meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education. The year under review has been marked by intense and varied activity in all fields of education and you are aware of many of the interesting developments that have taken place. To recount all of them would take too much time, but I would like to bring to your notice some of the more important developments which have taken place and promise to yield increasing returns in the coming years.

I shall take up first the question of basic education. For a long time it has been accepted that the prevailing system of elementary education must be replaced by basic education. Progress has not, however, been in conformity with our expectations. There has been an increase of only about 2,500 basic schools in the course of the last four years. The main reasons for this have been lack of the right type of teachers, inadequacy of training facilities and the large initial cost of establishing a basic school. About two years ago, the Centre decided to take a direct part in the expansion of basic education. Accordingly, we offered assistance to the States for the establishment of one intensive basic education centre in each State. A further step has now been taken by the decision to offer to all the States 30 per cent of the expenses for the conversion of the existing elementary schools into basic schools. So far as the establishment of new schools is concerned, it is hoped that the co-operation of the Centre and the States will enable us to ensure that they are increasingly of the basic pattern.

As you know, the progress made in this field in different parts of the country has not been uniform. The Government of India have therefore decided to appoint a small committee which will visit areas where basic education has struck root and make an "on-the-spot" study of the developments. We propose to utilise the report of this Committee for the planning of a programme of expansion of elementary education on basic lines in order to fulfil

---

*Speech at the 22nd meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, New Delhi, January 12, 1955*

as early as possible the constitutional obligation on the State to provide free and compulsory education to all children of 6-14 years. You will also find in the agenda a proposal for the constitution of a standing committee for basic education which can meet frequently and advise the Government of India on various technical and other issues connected with basic education.

Steps are being taken to expand the programme of social education in the country. You will remember that I spoke to you last year of the Central scheme for the expansion of education by the employment of new teachers in elementary schools and of social workers in select centres in urban areas. This was also intended to relieve the pressure of educated unemployment. I am glad to tell you that under this scheme a total of about 66,000 teachers and 2,000 social workers have been allotted to the various States up to November 1954.

The greatest emphasis during the current year has, however, been placed on the reconstruction and improvement of secondary education. I think you will all agree that this has till now been the weakest link in the Indian educational chain. It is yet, in a sense, decisive in determining the quality of education both at the elementary and the collegiate levels. Secondary schools supply teachers for elementary schools and students for colleges and other institutions of higher learning. An unsatisfactory system of secondary education undermines the entire system of education in the country.

You will remember that at the last meeting of the Board, I placed before you my ideas on secondary education. This is the stage up to which all should have the opportunity to go. In any case, it is the stage which marks, and will continue to mark the end of education for the vast majority. It should therefore prepare them for life, but I must regretfully admit that our secondary education does not at present fulfil this end.

The Government have, on your advice, generally accepted the recommendations of the Secondary Education Commission and initiated measures to give effect to them as early as possible. Discussions are being continually held with the State Governments, the universities and Boards of Secondary Education in order to carry out various necessary measures of reform. I will refer briefly to only some of the more important steps already taken in this behalf.

The duration of secondary education has been a subject of controversy over a number of years. Unfortunately, even the Secondary Education Commission did not give a clear lead in this matter and left it to the State to have either an eleven or a twelve years' secondary course. This has made it difficult to correlate secondary education with the universities and to ensure that there will be a uniformity of pattern both at the secondary and the university levels throughout the country. This question was taken up in a conference of the Education Secretaries held in November 1954. It was agreed to get round the difficulty by prescribing that 17 plus should mark the end of secondary education. There can be doubts and differences about the standards and courses in the secondary schools but there can be no doubt about the prescribed age. So long as the completion of secondary education and entrance thereafter to the university is fixed at 17 plus, the States may regulate the stages subject to the general pattern laid down by the Secondary Education Commission. Since the Constitution lays down six as the age for the commencement of compulsory education for all, this would favour an eleven years' course from six to 17 plus. However, this is a matter which requires careful consideration and I hope that the Board will give a clear lead to all the States.

We are all agreed that the standards of secondary education need to be raised. It has been suggested that the extension of the secondary course by one year will raise the standard of attainment and prepare pupils for entry into various vocations. As a result, there will not be the same rush for higher studies and it will reduce the pressure on the universities. I am happy to note that many of the universities are willing to fall in line with the suggestion of both the Radhakrishnan and the Mudaliar Commissions and agree to the institution of a three-year degree course at the end of the Higher Secondary School Certificate.

Another defect of the existing system of secondary education has been the lack of facilities for pupils with different abilities, aptitudes and tastes. The need to establish a large number of multi-purpose schools is therefore obvious but in spite of encouraging beginnings in some of the States, the vast majority of secondary schools are still of the academic type. The main difficulty here again has been lack of resources in men, material and funds. You will be glad to hear that the Government of India

have already initiated a scheme for the conversion of 500 high schools in the country into multi-purpose schools before the end of the present Plan period. It is proposed that the distribution of the schools will be on the basis of one multi-purpose school for each district. This will leave a balance of a little less than two hundred schools which will be utilised to meet the special requirements or demands from the various States. In addition, the Central Government have accepted a scheme for the improvement of teaching and equipment in another 1,000 to 1,500 schools during the same period so that roughly 20 per cent of the secondary schools in the country can be raised to a higher level. The multi-purpose schools will all be higher secondary schools and provide various types of courses in arts, science, agriculture, commerce and technical studies.

Steps have also been taken to set up a Textbook Research Bureau and a Bureau of Vocational and Educational Guidance. You will agree that an improvement in the quality of textbooks is essential if secondary education is to improve. In view of the proposed diversification of courses, it is equally important to ensure that pupils select their courses according to their aptitude, taste and ability. Immediate steps are therefore necessary to organise educational and vocational services, though these need not be of a very elaborate character in the beginning. The Central Bureau of Vocational and Educational Guidance will offer all possible help to the State Governments which may wish to set up their own Bureaux of Vocational and Educational Guidance. I would also suggest for your consideration that each State should set up a Board with the object of surveying opportunities for employment in its area and make the necessary information available to all the headmasters of secondary schools.

You will agree that the key to all educational improvement lies in a better type of teachers. Efforts are being continually made for the better training of teachers and generally improving their professional efficiency. I mentioned to you last year about the All India Headmasters' Seminar which was held in Simla. Its results were so promising that during the current year eight more Seminars have been organised on a regional basis. In addition, some of the States have organised their own Headmasters' Seminars. I am convinced that these Seminars are one of the

most effective types of in-service training and represent one of the best forms of investment in education.

All these measures designed to increase the duration of the course, raise the standard, diversify the syllabus and improve equipment, and library services are being pursued in close co-operation between the Central Government and the State Governments. The results will be reported to the Board, but I have felt that in view of the urgent need of improving the quality of secondary education, it would be desirable to set up a smaller body which could meet more frequently and review from time to time the progress made. I am therefore contemplating the setting up of a Council of Secondary Education more or less on the lines of the All India Council of Technical Education. The proposed Council will review the progress of secondary education throughout the country and serve as an expert body to advise the Government about the improvement and expansion of secondary education in all its phases. It will examine and appraise proposals submitted in this behalf to the Central Government and assist in the implementation of approved programmes. It will also maintain a nucleus of specialists in various fields of secondary education and thus increase through membership of its staff the number of Indian educationists who have had experience in the analysis and solution of problems of secondary education on all India basis.

In the field of university education, I have already reported to you that the University Grants Commission was set up in November 1953. A Bill to give it statutory recognition has been introduced in Parliament and is under its consideration. It is a matter of deep regret that we have lost the first Chairman of the Commission, Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar, before the Bill could be passed. In him we have lost one of our most eminent educationists who could have helped to build up the right traditions for the Commission.

In the meantime, you will be glad to hear that certain steps have been taken to increase the salary of teachers in the universities and expand the facilities of higher education in various directions. After the attainment of independence, it became clear that our universities did not have adequate facilities for the study of the language, history and culture of important regions of the world. Some provision existed for the study of the civilisation

and culture of Europe, but there were no faculties or departments which gave young Indians the opportunity of acquiring specialised knowledge of the Americas, the Middle East or the various zones of Asia. It was at the same time clear that India's increasing participation in international affairs demanded that there must be men and women with specialised knowledge of the language and culture of all important regions of the world. A beginning has now been made by taking steps to establish an institute for the study of Asian languages and culture at Banaras University, of the culture and languages of the Middle East at Aligarh University and a School of African Studies at Delhi University.

I will not go into details in the field of technical education as I surveyed it recently when I addressed the All India Council for technical education. Its report is before you and you will see that the progress in this field has been fully maintained. I would only add that the site for the Western Higher Technical Institute has been selected and action initiated for the establishment of Regional Schools of Printing as well as a School of Town Planning.

I have referred to the need of research in textbooks to improve their quality. Textbooks cannot and should not, however, be the only reading material for the growing children and adolescents. Great nations have taken justifiable pride in their children's literature. In India we have an ancient tradition that can challenge comparison with similar literature in any other country. In recent times, we have, however, neglected this important branch of literature and left unutilised the vast potential material that lies at our command. We have, during the last year, taken the first steps to remove the deficiency. Publishers are being encouraged to enter this field and produce literature that will satisfy the needs of our children and adolescents. Our schemes in this field are three-fold. Firstly, the Ministry will produce, under their own auspices, a few books so as to serve as examples and set the standard for other publishers. Secondly, we have commissioned the publication of a series of 25 books for children on selected subjects. Finally, we have offered 20 prizes for good and well-produced children's books in all the Indian languages. Two thousand copies of each prize-winning book will be purchased by the Central Government for distribution among schools, libraries and children's centres.

Perhaps even more than in the case of children, we must provide suitable literature for the neo-literate adults. I made a brief reference earlier to the expansion of social education in the country. One of the main obstacles to such expansion in the past has been the paucity of suitable literature. Adults who became literate often relapsed into illiteracy because of this fact. There is, however, an additional danger which arises out of lack of suitable literature. If the neo-literate adults do not find healthy and wholesome material to engage their minds, they are liable to resort to literature of an undesirable type. This is a problem which we share with most countries of the world. In many cases, increased literacy has led to a lowering of standards and taste. The main reason for this is lack of suitable literature for the average man. In the absence of creative and wholesome books, cheap comics, crime and sex stories and sensational political propaganda take possession of his entire mind.

The Government have therefore undertaken a special programme for the production of literature which, while it will be true to the traditions of our Indian heritage, will also seek to develop in the minds of the neo-literate adults a scientific and critical spirit, alive to the problems of the modern age. For this purpose, the Central Government have initiated a scheme whereby publishers and writers will be guaranteed a minimum sale of books, of the requisite quality. In addition, prizes are awarded to specially qualified books. You will be glad to hear that this has already evoked a wide interest from writers and publishers. In October 1954, 35 books in 14 Indian languages received governmental recognition or awards. We are now contemplating an extension of the programme of offering every possible encouragement to promising writers and publishers in all Indian languages. We have also planned to produce in the several volumes a popular Encyclopaedia in Hindi. This is intended to provide useful reading material of general interest to neo-literates. The first volume has been prepared and sent to the press and I expect it will soon be out.

The current year has also been marked by intense and varied activity in the field of culture. You are aware that a national academy of letters, the Sahitya Akademi, was set up in March and a national academy of fine arts, the Lalit Kala Akademi, in August 1954. The National Gallery of Modern Art was opened



in March 1954. A delegation of Indian artists was sent to the U.S.S.R. and a cultural troupe received from China. In addition, India participated in several international cultural conferences and sponsored art and culture exhibitions in various countries. An exhibition of Indian Art Through the Ages is at the moment touring some of the countries of Europe and the Middle East. The system of cultural scholarships has been attracting an increasing number of students from many foreign countries. Our students are also going abroad under various programmes of cultural exchange.

One of the most important developments in the field of cultural activities in the current year has been the organisation of a number of youth camps throughout the country. These are intended to give our young men and women in high schools and colleges an opportunity of living together and participating in various forms of creative and social activities. More than 300 such camps have already been held and more are planned in the coming months. In a sense, the culmination of such programmes for the youth of the country was the organisation of an All India Youth Festival in which students from almost all the Indian universities participated. The Government provided funds to bring them to the capital and house them in Talkatora Gardens. The various items they put up were evidence of the rich diversity of the culture of India. The Festival which gave an opportunity to a large number of young men and women from all parts of India to live together in common fellowship is bound to strengthen the bonds of unity among them and develop in our youth the consciousness of their Indian heritage.

I would also like to say a few words about the various activities undertaken in co-operation with Unesco. We participated in important projects like the Translation of Classics and the Arid Zone Programme. Our delegation played a very important role in the Eighth General Conference of Unesco and I am glad to inform you that the Ninth General Conference will be held in India. This will be the first time that one of the U.N. agencies will hold its general session in this part of the world.

You will remember that at the last meeting of the Board I spoke to you about the need for changing the existing rules of recruitment to various government and other services. Under the existing rules, the possession of a university degree is a neces-

sary condition for recruitment to all excepting the lowest service. This has led to an undue pressure on the universities and also to a sense of frustration among a large number of our educated youth. You will be glad to hear that this matter has been considered by the Government and a committee of specialists is being appointed to examine the question and submit specific proposals.

If the possession of a degree is no longer a prerequisite for employment, we hope that the pressure on the universities will diminish. It is, however, necessary to ensure that only young men and women of the highest calibre proceed for higher studies. At present, entry to the universities and even to the high schools is often dependent mainly on the financial position of the family. A democracy cannot flourish unless it offers equality of opportunity to all and takes every care to see that the best among its youth get the opportunity to develop their abilities. One measure for the equalisation of opportunity is the initiation of a system of scholarships in the various residential schools modelled on the British Public School.

It is generally admitted that these schools offer a better standard of education than our existing ordinary schools. Our aim is of course to improve the quality of all secondary schools but obviously it is impossible to raise 10,000 high and higher secondary schools to the necessary level immediately. Until such time, we must ensure that boys and girls of requisite ability are not denied the opportunity of receiving the more satisfactory education which public schools at present offer. One of the main criticisms against public schools in the past was that they catered only to the needs of a rich minority. The scholarships instituted by the Government of India seek to remedy this defect. You will be glad to hear that some of the boys and girls who have secured admission to public schools with our scholarships come from families whose monthly income is less than Rs. 100.

Another measure for the equalisation of opportunity is the expansion of the scope of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes scholarships. When I took over charge in 1947, the total amount utilised for all such scholarships was Rs. 3.5 lakhs. It has been my constant aim to increase the provision year by year and you will be glad to hear that in 1954-55 a sum of Rs. 1,07,00,000 is being spent for such scholarships.

The number of beneficiaries under the scheme has increased from 600 in 1947-48 to about 20,000 in 1954-55.

It would take me too long if I were to refer to the many interesting activities initiated and continued by the Department of Archaeology, the Department of Anthropology and the National Archives but I can inform you that they have shared in the general progress of which I have given you a brief report.

One measure of this increased activity in all fields of education is the financial allocation for education in our Central and State budgets. In 1953-54, the Central allotment for education was less than Rs. 8 crore. In 1954-55, the allocation is almost Rs. 20 crore. So far as the Governmental expenditure on education is concerned, the allotment has increased from Rs. 94 crore in 1953-54 to Rs. 112 crore in 1954-55.

There is one other matter to which I would like to refer before I conclude my survey. We all profess our devotion to the ideals which Mahatma Gandhi set before this country and the world but I have to say with regret that our practice does not always conform to our professions. Gandhiji believed in the innate dignity of man and had an equal reverence for all religions. For him, toleration was not a mere negative virtue of bearing with others who differed from him but a positive quality marked by love and reverence for all human beings. It is a matter for regret that these basic human values, which have been proclaimed by all religions and were reiterated by Gandhiji in his life and teachings, do not find a proper place in the curriculum of our institutions. Even where Gandhiji's life and teachings are taught in schools or colleges, the broad humanitarian aspects of his teachings are not always fully stressed. If a person differs from Gandhiji's views and does not accept his teaching, he certainly has the right of saying so. No one, however, has the right of professing to follow him and at the same time leaving out essential elements of his message. Nevertheless, divergences are to be found in different parts of the country and sometimes greater emphasis is placed on some of the less important aspects of his life and teachings. There is also at times a tendency to idolise him but neglect the real significance of his message.

I feel that the time has come when we should prepare a syllabus of his teachings for the use of educational institutions throughout India. In order to arrive at a uniform and correct interpretation

of his message, it is necessary to appoint a small committee of persons who have made a special study of his life and teachings. I am sure this meeting of the Board will give careful thought to this issue and suggest measures so that the real implications of Gandhiji's teachings are brought vividly home to our rising generations.

## 1857: THE NEED FOR A NEW EVALUATION

I have pleasure in welcoming you to the 31st Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission.

I am happy that at the invitation of the University of Mysore, this Session is being held in this beautiful city. In the British days, Mysore was in the vanguard of Indian States and marked by a liberal and progressive policy in education, industry and administration. On the attainment of independence, it merged with the Indian Union and immediately took its place among the more progressive and developed units of the nation. I am therefore happy that the Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission has given us an opportunity of visiting this progressive State.

Three years ago, on a similar occasion, I drew your attention to the need of utilising the material in the National Archives for the writing of a new history of the War of Indian Independence of 1857, generally described as the Sepoy Mutiny. I think you will agree with me that no objective history of the struggle has yet been written, though there have been any number of studies, long and short, on the subject. You are aware that after 1857 the nature and scope of this struggle was for a long time the subject of controversy both in and outside India. Many books have been written from different angles and even if we consider the work of only recognised historians, the number of such studies can be counted in hundreds. It is, however, clear that they are all written from one point of view, viz., that of the British. They all seek to represent this struggle as a rebellion of the Indian Army against the constitutional Government of the day. Some Indian States also joined in the revolt but these were States which nursed a grievance because of their annexation by Lord Dalhousie. The British Government, as the constituted authority of the land, suppressed the revolt and restored law and order. Not one of the many books written on the subject has sought to

interpret the events of 1857 in any other way. It may also be mentioned that while these authors describe in detail the many atrocities perpetrated by Indians on European men, women and children, not one has referred to the equal or worse crimes against Indians committed by the British.

It is now a general practice that official records are thrown open to research workers after about 50 years. This custom grew out of a decision of the United Kingdom about the records of the wars with Napoleon. Other countries of Europe also accepted this convention. 1908 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Mutiny. With the approach of this year, the Government of India decided to release for research all official papers connected with it and desired that a history of 1857 should be written on their basis. A three-volume history, based on official records, was published in due course.

This history has the same point of view as those written by other British authors. Only one new point came out in this publication. The author stated that so far as Oudh was concerned, the struggle had in it elements of a national uprising. Oudh had only recently been taken over by the British from an Indian king, and the people were resentful of this. They therefore felt justified in fighting the Company which had acted unjustly towards Oudh. This was, however, not a new discovery. Lord Canning, in his own despatches, had admitted that the struggle in Oudh had partaken of the nature of a national uprising. Since Lord Canning had himself stated this, the author of the book found no difficulty in saying so. The author has also pointed out that the lenient treatment meted out to the Taluqdars of Oudh after the suppression of the Mutiny was due to a recognition of this fact.

For some time past, I have felt that the time has come to write a new and objective history of the Movement of 1857. Three years ago when I spoke to you, I had this issue in my mind. Some months ago it suddenly occurred to me that 1954 was drawing to a close and in two years more we should have the centenary of the uprising. The first shots of the Mutiny were fired on May 10, 1857. There can therefore be no better occasion than May 10, 1957, to bring out a comprehensive history of the struggle.

I therefore decided that the work should immediately be taken in hand. You will be glad to hear that the Government of India have commissioned Dr. S. N. Sen, a well-known Indian historian,

formerly Director of the National Archives and for some time Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University, to write this book. It is my purpose that his work should be completed in such time as to publish the book on May 10, 1957.

I wish to make it clear that it will be a true history of the struggle of 1857, and not any partisan interpretation of the events. It must be based on facts and facts alone, and these facts must be collected from the records which we have in the Archives or elsewhere. The Government of India have therefore placed at Dr. Sen's disposal all records on this subject in the National Archives. It is also proposed to make available to him necessary data from the India Office in London.

I realise how difficult it is to write an objective account of events which have aroused so much passion in the past. It is not easy for an individual to hold the balance even, as he is influenced by personal, racial or national feeling. Nevertheless, this must be his constant endeavour if he is to be a historian in the true sense. I also concede that an objective history of the Mutiny was even more difficult to write before India became free. There are two factors which make the task more feasible today. The events we are to study are already a hundred years old. The poignancy which attached to them when they were fresh has been largely lost. We can look today on the hates and strifes of the actors with the detachment born out of distance in time. In addition, the incentive to make political capital out of these far-off events is gone. The political problem between India and Britain has been resolved, and resolved through negotiation and agreement which have created a new feeling of friendship between the two countries. The bitterness which characterised Indo-British relations in the past is no more. There is therefore an atmosphere today in which the events of 1857 can be studied dispassionately and objectively and without seeking to condemn or condone the faults of either party to the struggle.

It is noteworthy that no Indian of that period has written anything which can be regarded as an account of the struggle from the Indian point of view; but if we think over the matter, this is not surprising. We know that the struggle was suppressed with great violence and for many years there was an atmosphere of terror in the country. Thousands were executed without trial. There was hardly any region in Northern India where corpses,

hanging from gibbets, did not remind people of the vengeance of the Government. No Indian thus dared at that time to speak or write freely about the events of 1857. A few Indians who were servants or supporters of the Government have left some accounts but nobody who wanted to write freely and frankly had the courage to do so.

Evidence of how the Indian mind was terrorised is clear from the case of one man, Mirza Moinuddin. He was a Sub-Inspector of Police in the suburbs of Delhi during the Mutiny. He fled to Persia and returned after two years. At the request of Mr. Metcalf, whose life he had saved during the Mutiny, he wrote an account of his experiences but handed over the manuscript to Mr. Metcalf on the express condition that it must not be published so long as he was alive. There is hardly one word against the Government in his book which only describes how he himself fared during the Mutiny, but even then the fear which possessed him was so great that it was only under the condition mentioned above that he would hand over the manuscript to Mr. Metcalf. Metcalf kept his word and prepared an English translation of the book only after he heard of Moinuddin's death. The book could not, however, be published during Metcalf's life.

The question has often been asked as to who were responsible for the Mutiny. Suggestions have also been made sometimes that there was a group of planners who prepared a scheme according to which the movement was launched. I must confess that I have grave doubts on the point. During the Mutiny and in the years immediately thereafter the British Government carried out careful enquiries into the origin and causes of the Mutiny. Lord Salisbury said in the House of Commons that he for one was not prepared to admit that such a widespread and powerful movement could take place on an issue like the greased cartridge. He was convinced that there was more in the Mutiny than appeared on the surface. The Government of India as well as the Government of the Punjab appointed several Commissions and Boards to study this question, and all the legends and rumours current in those days were carefully examined. There was the story about the circulation of messages through *chapatis*. There was also the prophecy that British rule in India would last only a hundred years and would come to an end in June 1857, one hundred years after the Battle of Plassey. In spite of the long and searching



enquiry, there is so far no evidence that the Mutiny had been pre-planned or that the army and the Indian people had entered into a conspiracy to overthrow the Government. I find it somewhat difficult to believe that the research we are now undertaking will throw new light on this issue.

During the trial of Bahadur Shah efforts were made to prove that he was a party to a pre-planned conspiracy. The evidence which was adduced did not convince even the British officers who conducted the trial and will be dismissed as frivolous by any man of common sense. In fact, the course of the trial made it clear that the Mutiny was as much a surprise to Bahadur Shah as to the British.

Some Indians have written on the struggle in the early years of this century. If the truth is to be told, we have to admit that they are not history but mere political propaganda. These authors wanted to represent the Mutiny as a planned war of independence organised by the nobles of India against the British Government. They have also tried to paint certain individuals as the organisers of the revolt. It has been said that Nana Rao, the successor to the last Peshwa Baji Rao, was the master mind behind the Mutiny and established contacts with all Indian military establishments. As evidence of this, it is said that Nana Rao went to Lucknow and Ambala in March and April 1857, and the Mutiny started in May 1857. I think, you will agree, that this can hardly be regarded as conclusive evidence. The mere fact that Nana Rao toured Lucknow and Ambala some time before the Mutiny cannot be regarded as evidence that he planned it.

How baseless some of these conjectures are is clear when we find that these historians regard Ali Naqi Khan, the Wazir of Oudh, as one of the conspirators. Any one who has made a study of the history of Oudh will regard this suggestion as ridiculous. Ali Naqi Khan was completely a henchman of the East India Company. He was the man whom the British used to try to persuade Wajid Ali Shah to give up his kingdom voluntarily. General Outram, the British Resident, had promised generous rewards to Ali Naqi Khan if he succeeded in his mission. Ali Naqi Khan was so persistent in his efforts that Wajid Ali Shah's mother became apprehensive that he might secure his end by subterfuge. She therefore took the State seal in her own posses-

sion, kept it in the Zenana and issued orders that it should not go out without her orders. All these facts are well known in Lucknow and people there regard Ali Naqi Khan as a traitor. To suggest that such a man was one of the master minds behind the Mutiny is on the face of it absurd.

It has also been said of Munshi Azimulla Khan and Rangu Bapu that they had prepared the plans for the uprising. Azimulla Khan was the agent of Nana Rao and had been sent by him to London to plead his cause and secure for him the pension paid to Baji Rao. On his way back to India, he had visited Turkey where he had met Omar Pasha on the battlefield of Crimea. Similarly, Rangu Bapu had gone to appeal against another decision of Dalhousie regarding the incorporation of Satara into British India.

The fact that they had both been in London on such missions is regarded as pointing to their participation in the conspiracy. It is, however, clear that such suppositions are not evidence. Besides, even if they had talked about these matters in London, this could not by itself justify us in describing them as architects of the revolt unless we can connect them with the events in India. There is no evidence of such connection, and in the absence of records or testimony we cannot regard them as having planned the Mutiny. After the capture of Cawnpore, the British secured possession of all the papers of Nana Rao. The papers of Azimullah Khan also came into their possession. Among his papers, there was a letter addressed to but never sent to Omar Pasha, informing him that Indian soldiers had revolted against the British. Neither this letter nor any other paper of Azimullah Khan gives any indication that he had at any time prepared plans for any uprising in India.

In the light of the evidence we are therefore forced to the conclusion that the Indian Mutiny was not the result of careful planning nor were there any master minds behind it. What happened was that in the course of a hundred years the Indian people developed a distaste for the Company's rule and gradually realised that power had been captured by a foreign race. As this realisation became widespread, the conditions were created for an outburst which was due not to the conspiracy of a few individuals or groups but growing discontent of the entire people.

If it be asked why the revolt of the Indian people was delayed for almost a hundred years, the explanation may be found in the following facts. The growth of British power in India has perhaps no parallel in history. It was not a case of outright conquest of one country by another, but a story of slow penetration in which the people of the land themselves helped the intruders. The fact that the incursion of the British into India was not in the name of the Crown helped to conceal the true nature of their activities. If the British Crown had from the beginning taken any direct part in Indian affairs, the Indians would have realised that a foreign power was entering the country. Because it was a trading Company, they did not think of it as a potential ruler. It also enabled the agents of the Company to behave in a way which no agent of the Crown could have done. An agent of the British Crown would have felt some hesitation in kowtowing to princelings and local potentates or officers of the Moghul Court. The agents of the Company had no such scruples. They bowed to the pettiest officials with the same readiness as any Indian trader. They indulged in bribery and corruption without any fear of being pulled up by their own Ruler.

It is also noteworthy that for a long time the Company never acted in its own name. It always sided with some local chiefs in order to advance its own interests. Thus the Company established its position in the South by supporting the claims of the Nawab of Arcot. Similarly in Bengal, it acted in the name and under the authority of the Nawab Nazim of Murshidabad. Even after the Company became the virtual ruler of Bengal, it did not claim sovereignty. Clive approached the Emperor for the grant of Diwani rights and for decades the Company acted as the agents of the Emperor. Not only so but the Company also followed the conventions of the other Subedars and Governors of the Provinces. These Governors in Provinces had their own seals, but always described themselves as the servants of the Moghul Emperor. The Governor-General of the Company also had his own seal, but described himself as the servant of Shah Alam, the Emperor of Delhi. The other Governors and Subedars waited on the Emperor in audience, made presents to him and received in return rewards from the Emperor. The Governor-General also waited on the Emperor and made a *nazar* of 101 guineas. In return the Emperor gave him a *khilat* and titles, and these titles

were used by the Governor-General in all official documents. In this way the appearance of the sovereignty of the Emperor was kept up, and the people did not realise how the Company was gradually becoming the real ruler of the land.

This process continued till about the second decade of the 19th century. By that time the rule of the Company had spread up to Sutlej. The Governor-General of the day, Lord Hastings, felt that the time had come to assert his power and gradually disown the Emperor. His first move was to request the Emperor that he should be allowed to sit down during his audience with the Emperor. He also asked for an exemption from the payment of a *nazar*. The Emperor rejected these requests, and, for the time being, the Governor-General did not press the point.

The Company then sought to undermine the power of the Emperor by encouraging the growth of a kingdom independent of Delhi. An approach was made to the Nizam of Hyderabad to declare himself a king. The Nizam did not agree, but the British found a more willing agent in the Nawab-Wazir of Oudh. Oudh thus ceased to be a province of the empire and became a kingdom disowning its allegiance to the Emperor.

By 1835, the Company felt strong enough to strike coins in which the Emperor's name was left out. This came to many people as a shock. They realised that from being mere traders or agents of the Emperor, the Company had, in fact, become the ruler of vast territories in India. 1835 also saw a decision to replace Persian by English as the language of the Court. All these had a cumulative effect and made the people alive to the change in the status of the Company. The shock of the discovery created a great disturbance in their minds and affected not only the civil population but also members of the armed forces. It was this simmering discontent which ultimately broke out in the outburst of 1857.

The growing discontent was aggravated by two measures which may be regarded as immediately responsible for the outburst in 1857. One of these was the new policy which was initiated by Mr. Thompson, Lt.-Governor of the North-West Province (afterwards Agra and Oudh). At first, the Company had favoured a policy of maintaining or creating a class of landlords who would be natural allies of the Government. Thompson was of a different view. He believed that the existence of big

nobles and landlords could be a source of danger to the Company. He was therefore of the view that the landlords, as a class, should be eliminated and the Government should establish direct contact with the ryots. As a result of this new policy, the Company used every possible plea to dispossess nobles and landlords and bring their tenants directly under it.

The second and perhaps decisive factor was Dalhousie's policy by which he incorporated into British territory one Indian State after another. India was at that time passing through the last phase of feudalism. Under the feudal system, loyalty was to the immediate superior who was a landlord or a noble. There was no sense of allegiance to the nation or country. When people saw that the Indian States were being liquidated one after another and landlords were being eliminated as a class, it came as a great shock to them. They felt that the Company was at last showing itself in its true colours and seeking to change the very structure of Indian social and political life. The discontent reached its peak when Oudh was taken over by the Company. Oudh was a State which, for 70 years, had been a faithful ally of the Company. Never once during its connection had Oudh acted against its interests. When in spite of this, the King was forced to abdicate and the State taken over by the Company, the people received a rude shock.

The effect of the dissolution of the Kingdom of Oudh was the greater as a large proportion of the soldiers in the Bengal Army was from this area. They had served the Company faithfully and been one of the major factors leading to the extension of its sway in the land. They suddenly realised that the power which the Company had acquired through their service and sacrifice was utilised to liquidate their own king. I have little doubt in my mind that 1856, when Oudh was annexed, marked the beginning of a rebellious mood in the army generally and in the Bengal Army in particular. It was from this time that they began to think that the Company's rule must be brought to an end. During the Mutiny, Lawrence and others who sought to find out the feelings of the ordinary sepoy have left ample evidence in support of this view. The affair of the greased cartridge did not create a new cause of discontent in the Army, but supplied the occasion for under-ground discontent to come out in the open.

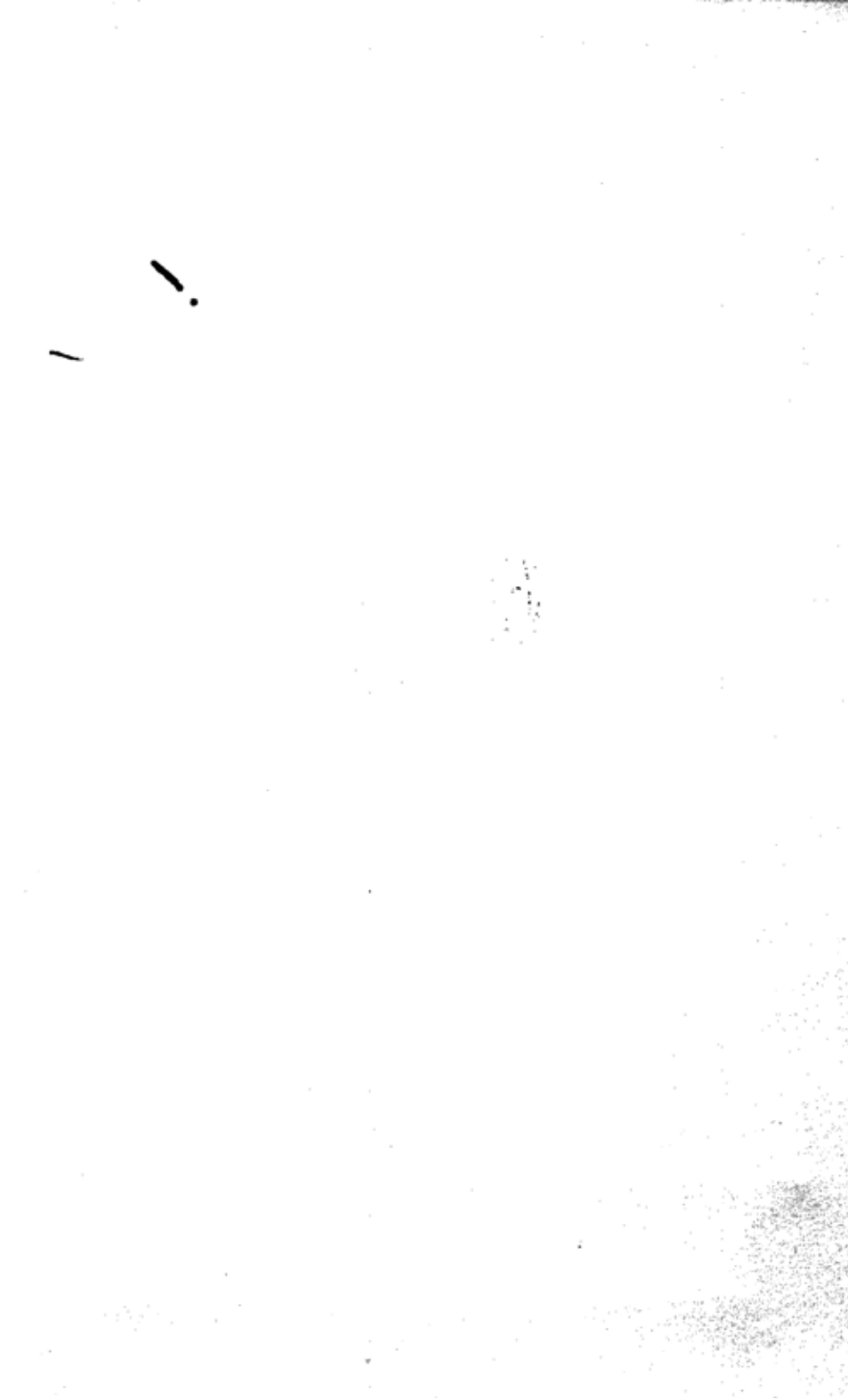
Though the work of writing this history has been entrusted to

Dr. S. N. Sen, it is obvious that the entire work of searching and examining the records in the Archives and elsewhere cannot be done by him single-handed. I would therefore give him full freedom to utilise the services of research scholars and staff to help him in this task, and I will, if necessary, create some special research scholarships for this purpose. We will also give him such help as he may need to have the records in the United Kingdom properly assessed. If any of you have any special suggestions in this connection or know of any material which may throw light in the matter, I should be grateful if you would get into touch with Dr. Sen. It is my hope that the book will be in your hands on May 10, 1957.

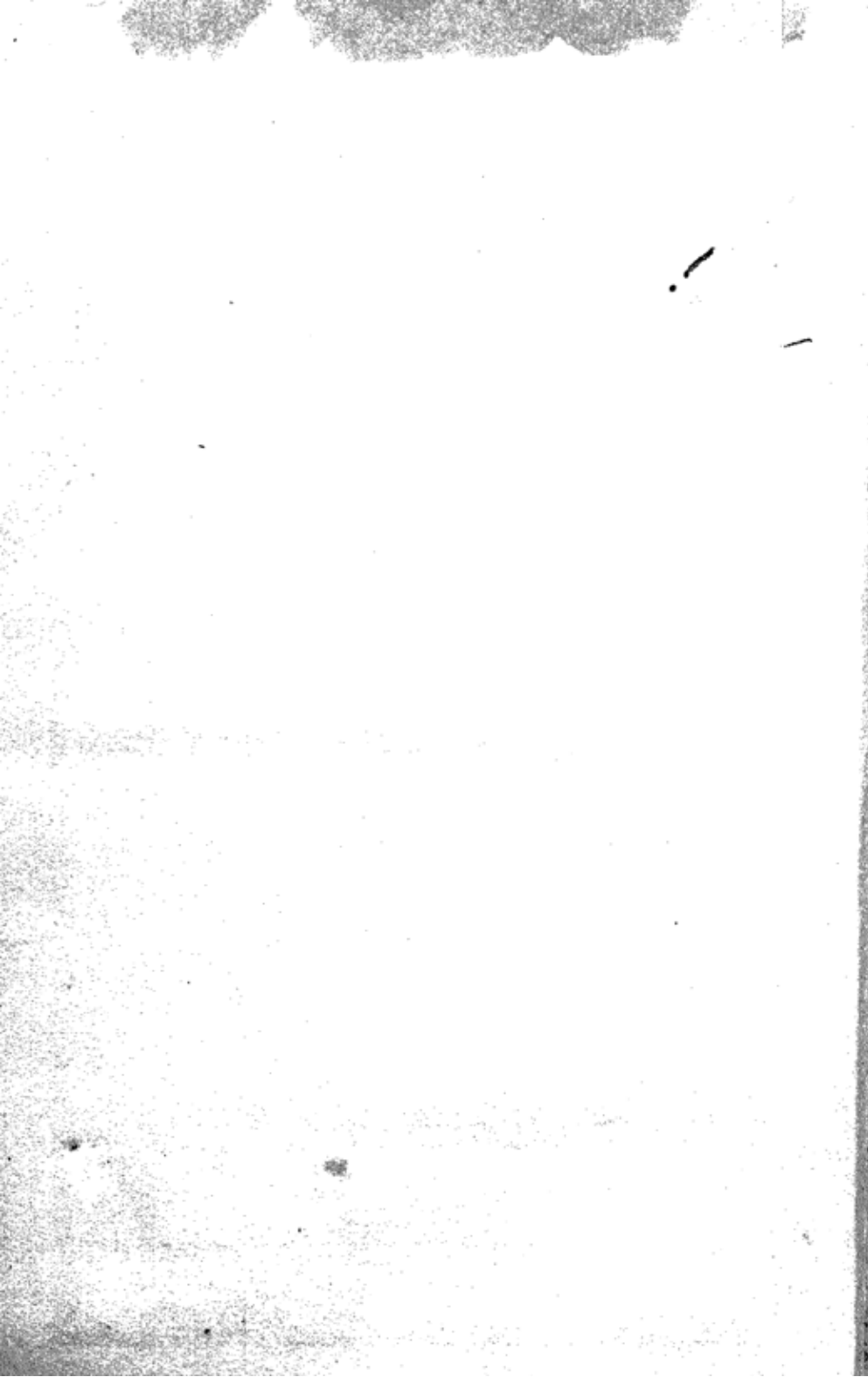
Before I conclude, I would like to make a brief reference to some of the more important activities of the National Archives since the last session of the Commission at Hyderabad. A detailed account will be found in the Director's report but I will make a special mention of the programme of acquiring microfilmed copies of records of Indian interest from various countries. The long-term programme of microfilming government records in our possession is also making steady progress. During the year under review about 3,00,000 pages of the Foreign Department and over 1,50,000 pages of the Home Department Original Consultations have been microfilmed. Important historical manuscripts like the Macartney Papers, the holograph letters of Henry Mayers Hyndman and some Persian, Arabic and Urdu manuscripts have also been acquired. I am also happy to note that the programme of publication has made good progress in the current year and steps have been taken to set up a boiler for the laminating machine which, when in operation, will solve one of the major problems for the preservation of records.

You are aware that we have sanctioned a scheme of six Research Fellowships for post-graduate students at the National Archives of India. The scholars have begun their work, and I am sure that this aid given by the Government of India will encourage the universities and the State Governments to institute similar fellowships and scholarships to enable an increasing number of students to undertake research in Indian History. I also hope that the example of Madras, West Bengal, Bombay, Punjab, PEPSU and U.P., who have set up their Record Offices on modern lines, will be followed by the other State Governments.









CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY  
NEW DELHI

Borrowers record.

Catalogue No. 370.4/aza-4666

Author—Azad, Abul Kalam.

Title—Speeches of Maulana Azad  
1947-1955.

| Borrower No. | Date of Issue | Date of Return |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| Sn SR Ras    | 7.8.56.       | 12-9           |

*"A book that is shut is but a block"*

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY  
GOVT. OF INDIA  
Department of Archaeology  
NEW DELHI.

Please help us to keep the book  
clean and moving.